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New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 42 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session: implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

Report of the Secretary-General (*A/57/227* and *A/57/227/Corr.1*)

Mr. Kondakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The HIV/AIDS pandemic seriously hinders achieving the development goals established in the Millennium Declaration and other key documents adopted at recent major United Nations forums. This problem is urgent for all countries of the world without exception. The severity of the problem is obvious, not only in Africa but also in Central and Eastern Europe, where, as members know, we have recently seen the highest rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence.

This unfortunate situation also exists in Russia, where HIV-infected people number more than 200,000. It is particularly alarming that 70 per cent of them come from the working population, ranging from 15 to 30 years of age. The number of HIV-infected women of childbearing years is growing.

The Government of Russia is taking very serious, comprehensive action in this area. A federal law to prevent the spread in the Russian Federation of diseases caused by the human immunodeficiency virus has come into force. A special federal programme on the prevention and combat of social diseases for the period 2002-2006 is being implemented, including a special subprogramme to combat HIV/AIDS. A programme to prevent mother-to-child transmission has been developed, and active cooperation is under way with our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the framework of the document signed on 13 May 2002, creating a programme of urgent measures to combat the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in CIS countries. International cooperation is a significant support to our own efforts in combating this pandemic. We hail the cooperation in this area through the United Nations system, primarily under the auspices of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization, and that involving other international institutions, in particular the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In our view, we need to step up efforts to mobilize resources for the Global Fund.

As is known, Russia contributed $1 million to the Fund in 2002. In our view, the fight against HIV/AIDS is now entering a new phase. Previously, creating the necessary resource base was the most urgent task. Now, what has become most urgent is making the most effective use of the resources and improving the strategy for combating HIV/AIDS.

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The basic components for that strategy should be a properly balanced combination of prevention and treatment, on the one hand, and a broad-based, targeted educational campaign, on the other. Education is the most important component of the fight against HIV/AIDS. We need to devise special programmes aimed at certain groups of the population — drug addicts, migrant workers, sex workers and young people. We see great potential for a role to be played by UNICEF, by the World Health Organization and by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in the development of matrices for educational methodologies that could be fine-tuned for specific regions and countries. In addition, we think that assistance should be given to the training of qualified instructors.

Equally important are the social and human-rights aspects of the fight against HIV/AIDS. Therefore, we believe that consideration should be given to establishing agreed guidelines for the development of national legal guarantees for a non-discriminatory approach towards those who are left vulnerable as a result of HIV/AIDS. It is important that proper medical and social services be provided for HIV-infected families, to overcome the social stigmas associated with the disease, to resolve problems related to the death of HIV-infected persons in a humane way and to develop a hospice network. We think that such an approach, combining medical, social, institutional and legal measures, would definitely improve our effectiveness in dealing with one of the most dangerous plagues of our age — that is, within the framework of international cooperation.

The successful attainment of the goals of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS requires a comprehensive, intersectoral approach towards public health as it is linked to economic development. That is how the report of the Secretary-General on progress in implementing the Declaration approaches the problem of HIV/AIDS. We value the report, particularly because it contains well-balanced conclusions and useful recommendations for further measures to implement the Declaration's goals. We support those conclusions and recommendations.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): At the outset, I wish to emphasize the great importance that my delegation attaches to this agenda item. In that regard, I wish to reaffirm my Government's commitment to addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects at the national, regional and international levels. My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation for the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (A/57/227 and Corr.1).

Today, the scale of the AIDS crisis outstrips even the worst-case scenarios of a decade ago. Dozens of countries are in the grip of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and many more are at the brink. Based on current trends, it is projected that, between 2000 and 2020, 68 million people will die from AIDS in 45 of the most affected countries. Moreover, the HIV/AIDS pandemic shows no sign of levelling off in the hardest-hit countries, and as much as $10 billion is needed annually to fight it effectively. HIV/AIDS is a global health catastrophe that has decimated populations and left millions of children bereft of care, guidance and a secure future. By diminishing the number of productive citizens, it has also retarded economic growth and development.

The Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS establishes time-bound targets to which Governments should be held. The Declaration calls for an expanded global response in areas including leadership; prevention, care and support; human rights; orphans and children left vulnerable; research and development; and resources. We also support the United Nations system's framework for accelerated action on HIV/AIDS in four key areas. These include advocacy, including promotion of the Declaration and its endorsement by global and regional conferences; normative guidance and operational support, with an emphasis on guidance for United Nations country teams; communications and public information; and civil society support. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS for its monitoring and evaluation framework, tailored to the Declaration's goals and targets at both the global and national levels.

I wish to inform the Assembly that the principles of the Declaration are embodied in a Philippine law adopted in 1998. That law articulates the State's intent to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS across all sectors of our society. Following the strong commitments made by our Government through its acceptance of the goals and time-bound targets set by the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Philippines has taken action in support of those goals and targets. In that regard, our Government submitted a $35 million

proposal last September to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of which $13 million was proposed for the HIV/AIDS component.

The Philippines, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, also hosted a collaborative meeting among member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the Greater Mekong Delta in April 2001. The Philippine experience served as the ASEAN model for responses to HIV/AIDS-related vulnerability among migrant workers. We have also participated actively in other international conferences on HIV/AIDS. At the regional level, an ASEAN task force on HIV/AIDS has been established. One of its recent activities, in which the Philippines participated, was the exchange of information during exploratory meetings on increasing access to HIV/AIDS drugs, held last June in Indonesia.

We will continue to support programmes that enhance regional and international networking, including South-South cooperation programmes on best practices with regard to dealing with this growing pandemic. We also support efforts to mainstream the HIV/AIDS issue into the development agenda, as it is a serious challenge to a people's health and to a nation's sustained growth and development. In that regard, alternative job opportunities should be provided to reintegrate people living with AIDS into their families and communities.

While many countries have developed national AIDS strategies aimed at meeting the global and national challenges encountered in implementing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the alarming magnitude and spread of this deadly disease urgently require focused and concerted action on the part of all nations.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the Central American Integration System — Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama — as well as on behalf of the Dominican Republic, in its capacity as observer.

First of all, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for preparing and submitting the report on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (A/57/227 and Corr.1). The report not only gives us an idea of the progress made since the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, but it also serves us by focusing on areas in which greater efforts are still required.

Data recently provided by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS show that, far from having stabilized as it was expected to do some time ago, the epidemic continues to spread. Here, we hail the efforts being made in Africa and in Asia, where countries such as Uganda, Zambia and Cambodia offer commendable models of how to reverse the course of generalized epidemic through firm political commitments and large-scale prevention programmes, carried out despite unfavourable socio-economic conditions.

We further express our solidarity with our Caribbean brothers who, by reason of their adult HIV prevalence rates, live in the second most affected area in the world after sub-Saharan Africa. We praise the efforts they are making at the regional level through the Pan-Caribbean Partnership, which are coordinated by the secretariat of the Caribbean Community.

In the case of Central America and the Dominican Republic, reports indicate that in some countries the estimated prevalence of HIV among pregnant women is equal to or higher than 1 per cent due especially to the fact that the epidemic is deeply rooted in the general population. In addition, the same reports show that the combination of uneven socio-economic development and the considerable mobility of the population are factors that favour the spread of HIV in Central America, with the epidemic concentrated chiefly in socially marginalized groups. Population mobility is becoming a significant factor in the spread of the epidemic to the extent that some recent research underscores the need for interventions at frontier posts and transit stations with a view to protecting migrant workers and sex workers from infection.

Protecting vulnerable mobile populations, including adolescent girls and young women, is now the focus of the AIDS and migration project, a regional initiative established by the Governments of Central America, Mexico and the United States. Were the epidemic to continue with the characteristics I have mentioned, it can be assumed on the basis of a mathematical projection that over the next 10 years it could significantly impair productivity and development in our region.

It is for those reasons that the Governments of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the

Dominican Republic have launched national AIDS programmes, some of which have been reviewed this year. In formulating or reviewing many of these plans, we have had the benefit of far-reaching participation by non-governmental organizations, people living with HIV/AIDS, relevant ministries, human rights ombudsmen, social security systems and even the armed forces.

In compliance with the Declaration of Commitment, some of our countries have initiated programmes for preventing mother-to-child transmission by providing AZT to HIV-infected pregnant women from the fourteenth week of pregnancy and to children at the time of birth. They have likewise concluded agreements with non-governmental organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS in order to provide them with antiretroviral treatment and to enable them to contribute to institution-building.

But these national, regional and even interregional efforts are not sufficient. We need the support of the international community. At the Latin American level there has been a rapid increase in South-South cooperation, it being understood that groups that exchange knowledge become more powerful and efficient. Such efforts deserve to be highlighted. It is nevertheless essential that we continue to explore all the tools set out in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, not only to produce generic drugs, but also to enable developing countries to protect the health of their populations.

Our countries believe in a human-rights-based approach, and statutes have been enacted to promote education as from the primary level, thus giving priority to prevention among the young. These laws further aim at preventing the HIV-related stigmatization and marginalization of vulnerable populations and of persons who have been infected or affected by the virus.

The Governments of SICA countries and the Dominican Republic wish to reaffirm the commitment we assumed at the twenty-sixth special session, as well as our conviction that through leadership at the highest level it will be possible to change the HIVAIDS situation in our region.

Mr. Fall (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The African Group has honoured me by asking me to speak on its behalf under agenda item 42. I accept its invitation and am very pleased to comply with its wishes.

Some figures will make it possible to construct the horrifying picture that we see and to give an idea of this apocalyptic vision of a terrible scourge with horrible social, economic and humanitarian consequences. This year HIV/AIDS will have infected 27 million Africans, 75 per cent of those infected worldwide, claiming far more victims than in all African conflicts or in the Second World War.

Children and young people constitute the majority of those affected. The epidemic has had a major negative impact on the development of children, on the reproductive health of young people and on life expectancy, which has been shortened by 20 per cent and which has fallen well below 40 years of age. Poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy, all contribute to the spread of AIDS; the pandemic has led to the reappearance of endemic parasitic and infectious diseases and has seriously undermined the quality of human resources, sustainable development, the survival of African peoples and of humanity as a whole, and hence international security, to the extent that the problem of AIDS was for the first time placed on the agenda of the Security Council, in January 2000 (*see S/PV.4087*). The war on AIDS needs to be expanded and made more systematic. There needs to be an increase in financial resources and development aid. A minimum of $3 billion a year is required, according to projections by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), in order to effectively combat this pandemic in Africa alone.

This was the theme of the Second African Development Forum, organized by the Economic Commission for Africa in November 2000 in Addis Ababa; of the Lome Declaration on HIV/AIDS in Africa, adopted at the thirty-sixth Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); of the Ouagadougou Commitment of 9 May 2000, adopted within the context of our international partnership against HIV/AIDS; and of the Declaration and Framework for Action adopted at the OAU special summit on HIV/AIDS held in Abuja in 2001.

Over the past decade or so, African heads of State or Government have adopted a wealth of resolutions and declarations raising the consciousness of populations in Africa and throughout the world about

the vital need to control this scourge through two successive approaches. The first phase is to adopt programmes of action organized around the Dakar Declaration on the AIDS Epidemic in Africa, adopted on 1 July 1992 at the twenty-eight OAU Summit, as well as a six-point programme of action focusing on political mobilization, prevention, treatment, research, partnership between the public and private sectors and external resources. Here I should mention also the Tunis Declaration on AIDS and the Child in Africa, adopted on 15 June 1994 at the Thirtieth OAU Summit.

The second phase is that of an overall assessment of political reorientation and the reallocation of resources in the framework of a new partnership. Steps towards this end include the decision taken at the 68th session of the Council of Ministers of the OAU, on 7 June 1998, on the follow-up to OAU resolutions and declarations; the Ouagadougou Declaration, adopted at the 34th OAU Summit, on the creation of an African fund to combat AIDS; the Algiers Declaration of the 70th Council of Ministers of the OAU on cooperation among the OAU, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, in the framework of an innovative and synergetic partnership; and the commitments undertaken at Ouagadougou by the African Ministers of Health.

Hence, the Abuja Framework of Action and Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases in Africa, adopted on 25 April 2001 following the African Summit, gave new momentum to the mobilization of our continent against the exponential spread of this pandemic. Abuja also identified areas requiring priority action, which were taken up again and endorsed by the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, held in June 2001 in New York. The Declaration of Commitment that emerged from that session highlights, inter alia, the lack of resources devoted to this epidemic; the need for national, subregional and regional capacity-building in the combat against AIDS and for the strengthening of international cooperation; and the need to forge dynamic partnerships, in particular among Governments, the United Nations system, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, pharmaceutical companies, and the public and private sectors.

The Declaration also urges regional organizations and partners actively to participate in the quest for solutions to the HIV/AIDS crisis. It also calls for support for regional and subregional initiatives relating to this pandemic, in particular the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa; the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) African Development Forum Consensus and Plan of Action; and the Abuja Declaration and Framework for Action.

To sum up, the Declaration of Commitment stresses the following concerns and priorities: prevention; care; support and treatment; HIV/AIDS and human rights; protection for vulnerable persons and AIDS orphans; mitigation of the socio-economic impact of the disease; research and development; HIV/AIDS in conflict areas; the question of resources; and, last but not least, the question of follow-up to the implementation of these commitments.

This last point is crucial for Africa and for our group. In this respect, might I recall the following facts.

The special session on AIDS was held largely because of the spread of the pandemic in Africa, but also, and especially, because of the mobilization of our group and of its regional partners, which together brought their full force to bear on the issue. More than three quarters of the heads of State or Government who participated in that session were from Africa. But unfortunately, despite the commitments undertaken in June 2001, the pandemic continues to gain ground in Africa. The resources that we need are not yet available, and access to antiretroviral drugs and other forms of treatment is still difficult and costly.

So how can we continue to ensure that Africa plays a key role in the continuing mobilization of people in the fight against the pandemic? How can we ensure the speedy implementation of the commitments undertaken at the special session?

Humbly, I would suggest the following thoughts in response to that crucial question. I think, first, that it is important to stress the need for robust national follow-up by our Governments in order to develop and strengthen ongoing comprehensive follow-up action here at the United Nations.

First, at the national level, as stressed in the Declaration of Commitment, we must maintain and strengthen the momentum created at that special session. In that context, three tasks were assigned to our Governments: periodic national assessments of the

progress made and the obstacles encountered in implementing the June 2001 commitments; the development of monitoring instruments and mechanisms, on the basis of sufficient epidemiological data; and the promotion and protection of the fundamental rights of HIV-infected persons.

For these reasons, it is important for us all to know what has been done and what has been planned in our various countries over the last year, in particular to put in place a bold policy of information dissemination, education and consciousness-raising, together with the various stakeholders, the public and private sectors, political and religious groups, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and other forces that shape public opinion.

Secondly, at the regional level, the OAU — now the African Union — and the subregional organizations must also play a part. The General Assembly recommended the inclusion, where appropriate, of the HIV/AIDS issue on the agenda of regional meetings held at the ministerial or summit level. The various subregional chapters of our group will ensure that this recommendation is implemented within, inter alia, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and during regular OAU/African Union meetings.

Thirdly, at the global level, I wish to recall at the outset that three main recommendations were made by the special session: that at least an entire day during the regular session of the General Assembly be devoted to consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment, including a debate on the report; that AIDS-related items be included on the agendas of all relevant United Nations conferences and meetings; and that initiatives be taken to organize conferences, seminars, study days, training sessions and so on, to ensure that all questions covered in the Declaration of Commitment are followed up, and that the experience and expertise of our research specialists and of our human resources are shared for the benefit of all, so that we can help to create synergy of action in the fight against this scourge.

We welcome the excellent report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. This report likewise stresses the obstacles that need to be overcome and the constraints of all kinds that need to be eliminated to speed up the effective implementation of the Declaration. As the report states, several sub-Saharan African countries have already mainstreamed into their national strategies, or are in the process of doing so, the goals of the Declaration, in the context of specific time frames.

Africa welcomes the extraordinary mobilization of the entire United Nations system to implement the Declaration of Commitment. We must also mobilize young people, non-governmental organizations and persons living with the disease in the context of our national and regional strategies for combating HIV/AIDS.

But one cannot overemphasize the imperative need for a substantial increase in the resources earmarked for the campaign against HIV/AIDS. A total of $10 billion will be needed by 2005 to strengthen global action against AIDS.

The resources of the Global Fund, which was established this year, must therefore be increased and consolidated. Impact studies should also be carried out to enable us to better understand the effects of the pandemic on families, communities and society in general, as well as on the economic and social policies of our States. Greater attention should be paid to this disease in regions or countries that are suffering from armed conflict.

In conclusion, I would like to express the full support of the African Group for the 12 recommendations in the Secretary-General's report. We have no doubt whatever that the General Assembly will strongly and unanimously endorse those recommendations so that the priorities established for 2003 can be attained.

Can we rise to this tremendous challenge to human solidarity and build a world completely free from AIDS and other diseases and scourges — a world of peace and security, where extreme poverty and destitution can be overcome? We still have time to raise our sights, because we now have real grounds for hope and a common determination to work together. But we must start here and now.

Mr. **Naidu** (Fiji): I would like to thank the President for giving me the opportunity to speak on this agenda item on the report of the Secretary-General

on progress towards the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, and I am honoured to do so on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum countries with missions in New York: Australia, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji, as well as Kiribati and Palau. The Pacific Islands Forum group also addressed the special session on HIV/AIDS, which took place in May 2001, on issues which are also relevant to our discussion today.

We would like at the outset to note the reported successes that Cambodia, Thailand, Uganda and Zambia have achieved in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Those successes give us hope that our concerted effort is the global way forward.

Despite those trends, HIV/AIDS remains the worst epidemic, and one of the greatest development, security and global challenges, in human history. In the worst affected countries of the world, one quarter of the total population is infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. The impact of the epidemic in those countries is disastrous: the workforce is significantly reduced; millions of children are orphaned; and opportunities for social, economic and other forms of development are seriously affected. With over 40 million people living with the virus, and given the continuing, alarming rate of infection of 5 million people every year, urgent action is imperative in order to stem the tide of this scourge.

For the Pacific region, the comparatively low rate of reported infections presents the danger of a false sense of security or of immunity against HIV/AIDS. More realistically, the rate of HIV infection is increasing in the Pacific region, and it remains a high-risk area. Since the special session on HIV/AIDS last year, positive cases have been reported in previously unaffected Forum member States. Statistics also show that the number of those infected in some Pacific States has doubled. The Secretary-General's report on this global trend upwards is sobering. However, we take comfort in the time-bound, quantifiable and targeted commitments in the special session's Declaration. Those are the benchmarks that can guide Member States today as we begin to respond to the projections, and to the new and deviating trends that the virus is now displaying. We recognize the important role that awareness-raising and education play in any prevention campaign.

While reflecting on the achievements and progress we have made thus far in the battle against HIV/AIDS, the report reminds us of the mammoth tasks ahead in implementing commitments to combat the pandemic. We have indeed covered considerable ground in 16 months, notably in the areas of leadership, partnership and resources.

Leadership at the global level has enabled the international community to be sensitized on HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS has been given due prominence and focus in critical international meetings for the decade, beginning with the Millennium Summit, the Doha Ministerial Conference and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Efforts at the regional level include the formulation of appropriate policy directions and mechanisms and the mobilization of resources and initiatives in the battle against the epidemic. The Pacific Islands Forum prioritized HIV/AIDS in its political communiqué of August 2002. In calling for additional measures at the regional level, the Forum leaders directed the Forum secretariat to spearhead the development of a Pacific Regional Plan of Action Against HIV/AIDS. They also endorsed a concerted regional approach to accessing international financial assistance from sources such as the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS. On a broader scale, States within the Asia-Pacific region, particularly the more vulnerable small island States, have benefited from a more focused subregional approach.

Our regional efforts are hampered by compounding difficulties, such as the lack of funding and technical capacity in our regional organizations to implement these regional initiatives. Hence, there is an urgent need for international support and assistance in our collective struggle against the epidemic.

A total of 91 countries have put in place national strategies and established national AIDS councils, as well as nationwide programmes and activities to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. However, other countries, including certain worst affected countries, have yet to establish such national instruments to address the epidemic.

Most of our members have in place appropriate national HIV/AIDS policies, as well as legal,

administrative and institutional mechanisms and programmes. The cross-sectoral involvement of all Government ministries, non-governmental organizations and private sector and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of policies and programmes needs to be harnessed and better coordinated. In our region, efforts to implement policies and programmes are often impeded by lack of financial resources and technical expertise.

Greater involvement of young people as significant agents for positive change in this challenging area is being pursued in our region. We have started to look at improving media tools and perspectives in the handling of HIV/AIDS. A recent breakthrough in access to antiretroviral drugs in our region needs financial backing for greater access. Most of our members have provided funding and technical assistance within our region.

We acknowledge the valuable financial contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, including contributions by some of our own Pacific Islands Forum members. The Global Fund has certainly assumed an important responsibility in the provision of much-needed support and assistance to developing countries in their battle against HIV/AIDS. In particular, the Fund can assist in mobilizing resources from the private sector, which is very important if the $10 billion annual requirement from all sources to fight HIV/AIDS is to be achieved. The Fund's targeted disbursements of $3 billion next year represent a 50 per cent increase over the amount available last year. We are, therefore, confident that resources will continue to be mobilized and positive impacts will continue flowing from its allocation to low and middle-income countries. Our group reiterates that a small fraction of the $3 billion figure would more than arrest the rate of infection in our small island populations. We need to be assisted in this venture to reach a very positive outcome, which is possible in the Pacific region.

The achievement of our common objectives in such areas as prevention, care, treatment, reducing vulnerability, assistance to children orphaned by AIDS, alleviating social and economic impact and research and development are contingent on the availability of adequate resources at the disposal of developing countries. The small populations and unique vulnerabilities that our small island developing member States face have prioritized prevention strategies in national action plans. In this connection, the report favours our strategy in highlighting the significance of prevention, where it describes the sustained rate of infection in high-income countries, despite all their advantages of access to care.

We would be remiss if we did not note the involvement of important partners in galvanizing our collective efforts. We commend the leadership provided by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the work of its member agencies or co-sponsors system-wide. We appreciate their efforts to work collaboratively with national and regional civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector bodies to fight HIV/AIDS in their programme areas and activities.

In conclusion, these international achievements, including the establishment of the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, United Nations system-wide collaboration and partnership with the World Bank, NGOs, civil society, and other stakeholders, must be sustained if we are to meet our common objective to reduce by 2005 HIV prevalence among young men and women, aged 15 to 24, in the most affected 25 per cent of the population, and 25 per cent globally by 2010.

For developing countries, resourcing needs constrain the ability to make progress in the battle against HIV/AIDS. Recognizing these special needs, we encourage the international community to provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries, such as the Pacific Island countries, to enable them to pursue both regional and national initiatives in the battle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): The subject of HIV/AIDS is of great importance and concern to Guyana. Being part of the Caribbean region, which has the second highest incidence of HIV/AIDS infection in the world, and faced with a very serious problem in our own country, we are pledged to exerting every effort at all levels — nationally, regionally and internationally — to rid the world of this scourge. It is against this background that I am honoured to set out the views of my Government at this stage on the item before us. In so doing, I wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the presentation of a clear and thoughtful report on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, which is contained in document A/57/227.

The report of the Secretary-General presents a mixed picture of the progress made since the Declaration was adopted in June 2001. On an encouraging note, the report points to signals of increasing political commitment, as well as additional resources, devoted to combating HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, it makes clear that the global response has so far been insufficient to meet the challenge of successfully halting and reversing the spread of this pandemic. The Secretary-General thus makes an urgent call for the scaling up of global efforts to halt the advance of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a call that my delegation wholeheartedly supports.

Of particular concern to us in Guyana is the fact that the infection rate is highest among those who are 15-49 years of age. In addition to its heavy human toll, the disease constitutes a serious threat to the productive sector of our population, as well as to our efforts to promote economic and social development. For these reasons, my Government has redoubled its efforts, with the help of the international community, including sisterly developing countries, and agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development and the Canadian International Development Agency, to combat the spread of this dreaded disease in Guyana.

Since the convening of the United Nations General Assembly's special session on HIV/AIDS last year, significant progress has been made at the national level. HIV/AIDS has been incorporated into Guyana's Poverty Reduction Strategy, and our 2002 allocation to address this pandemic has more than doubled, compared to the allocations made in 2001; this was facilitated in part by debt relief received under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative. In addition, earlier this year, my country conducted a response analysis of its HIV/AIDS programme, which led to the development of a Multisectoral Strategic Plan for 2002 to 2006, replacing a previous Strategic Plan that covered the period of 1999 to 2001.

Guyana's Multisectoral Strategic Plan emphasizes a three-pronged approach to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and focuses on prevention, treatment and care and other forms of support for the victims of this tragedy. In collaboration with various partners of the United Nations Theme Group operating locally, the peer education and youth-specific HIV education programmes have been expanded, and culturally appropriate messages have been developed and are being delivered at popular youth events. Time-bound targets for reducing the prevalence of HIV among young people aged 15 to 24 have also been incorporated into the national strategic plan as a means of evaluating progress. The prevention strategy further takes into consideration mother-to-child transmission. On 21 November 2001, a pilot programme was initiated that offers voluntary counselling and testing services, as well as mother-to-child transmission care, to all prenatal women attending the pilot sites. Mothers are counselled about their breast-feeding options, and infants born to mothers who choose not to breast feed are provided with free breast-milk substitutes. In health care settings precautions have been strengthened with the provision of post-exposure prophylaxis with antiretroviral drugs to health care workers in all regions of the country.

A very significant development in the combat of HIV/AIDS in Guyana was the commencement in March of this year of the manufacture of antiretroviral drugs and the accompanying treatment programme. Under that programme, access to antiretroviral drugs is now universal and provided free of cost. Furthermore, voluntary and confidential counselling services, as well as testing facilities, have been expanded, with the increasing partnership of non-governmental organizations.

Notwithstanding the substantial efforts being made at the national level to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, much more remains to be done, especially with regard to efforts to foster change in sexual behaviour and to bring an end to the stigmatization and discrimination of infected individuals. In addition, programmes will also have to be developed locally with regard to the care of children orphaned by the disease.

Our efforts at the national level have been complemented by regional initiatives such as the Pan-Caribbean Partnership, which is a collaborative effort of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Through that mechanism, CARICOM as a region earlier this year successfully negotiated with pharmaceutical companies for cheaper antiretroviral drugs, in an effort to accelerate access to treatment and care. Although the cost of these drugs has been significantly reduced, to approximately $1,200 per person per year, it is still too expensive a form of treatment that is beyond the capability of many of our

member States. In addition, national AIDS programme managers and coordinators in the region have also aligned themselves into the Caribbean Coalition of National AIDS Programme Coordinators, which serves as a useful forum for exchange of experiences and the development of best practices within the region.

During the General Assembly special session, held last June, my delegation clearly articulated how national efforts to combat the spread of AIDS could be stymied by a lack of resources. We underscored the grave threat that would be faced by countries if urgent action were not taken to significantly increase the levels of investment in the care, treatment and prevention of this disease. We remain convinced that further concerted action in the following areas is essential to provide new impetus and impact to action at the national level.

First, there must be increased collaboration between international development agencies and international financial institutions, with a view to the provision of further debt relief to heavily indebted countries in order that more resources can be made available to strengthen national health care systems and address the current crisis.

Secondly, relevant United Nations agencies should intensify their efforts, working with Member States, to support the development of national strategies aimed at halting and reversing the spread of AIDS.

Thirdly, greater efforts are needed at both the global and the national levels to ensure that antiretroviral drugs are made more accessible to persons in developing countries.

Fourthly, we urge countries in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Global Fund in order to facilitate its work in the areas of HIV/ AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. While it has been estimated that some $10 billion is required annually to combat the spread of this disease, we note that, to date, the resources of the Fund amount to little more than 20 per cent of what is required.

In conclusion, I would wish to underscore the fact that my Government continues to face great challenges in its effort to combat the spread of AIDS in Guyana. At the same time, I am honoured to reiterate our commitment to actively collaborate with other Member States and the international community at large in efforts to halt the spread of this global scourge. We firmly believe that our collective response to the pandemic must be commensurate with the global recognition that HIV/AIDS is the single greatest threat to the well-being of future generations.

Mr. Acemah (Uganda): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to hold discussions on HIV/AIDS. This confirms the commitment of the international community to update itself on how far we have come, but, more importantly, on how far we have to go. We thank the Secretary-General for his leadership in this regard, and for his report on progress towards the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (A/57/227).

Much as Uganda has dealt with the HIV/AIDS pandemic for approximately 20 years, my delegation views this plenary meeting as an opportunity to listen to others and to learn from them regarding what we may not have done to combat the pandemic. The Government of Uganda has achieved remarkable success in efforts to grapple with this problem, but I would not underestimate the fact that a lot remains to be done.

Over 1 million Ugandans are infected with HIV/AIDS and approximately the same number have died as a result of the disease, children continue to be born with HIV and there are many orphans whose parents have died of AIDS. Today almost 2 million children in Uganda have been orphaned, and many of those orphans are infected with the disease.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on our medical facilities, economy and social structures, especially the family, thus presenting a major security threat. The dynamics of society have changed to a large extent due to the fact that a large number of the productive segment of the population have been infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. The situation I have described has not left Ugandans in despair. People living with HIV/AIDS in Uganda have become an effective weapon against the pandemic. The Ugandan Network and Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS has mounted effective advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns.

Ugandans living with HIV/AIDS are cooperating with people living with HIV/AIDS in other countries of the world to share experiences. We hope that this and other partnerships worldwide will gain momentum into a global campaign to fight the pandemic. Very soon in

Uganda there will be a convergence of great minds from different parts of the world to take on the problem. Those great minds will include people living with HIV/AIDS. Public debate about the pandemic is an effective mechanism for sensitizing the masses while at the same time seeking solutions.

HIV/AIDS remains a complex problem with no known cure. Uganda recognizes that it is a multidimensional problem that requires a multisectoral approach. Uganda has made the few successes for which it is recognized by harnessing the few opportunities available to its people. With limited scientific information available, fear, panic, denial, stigma and discrimination were prevalent in the past. However, owing to the political will and leadership on the part of the President of Uganda, acceptance is becoming the norm and the rate of infection has been significantly reduced.

Openness, political support and commitment have been key to reducing the number of HIV/AIDS cases, since the youth are being educated about the problem. The President of Uganda has instituted a mechanism through which he is frequently briefed on the education in schools regarding HIV/AIDS. Local leaders have followed the example of the President by addressing grass-roots communities. Awareness levels have risen to 99.7 per cent and knowledge is at 78 per cent of the population.

HIV/AIDS issues are part and parcel of Uganda's national programmes including education, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan and debt relief. Resources from debt relief have been channelled to AIDS activities, as well as the empowerment of women and girls, health care and law reform measures. Also important to the Government is cooperation with the private sector, the business community and civil society. The Uganda AIDS Commission is spearheading coordination of multisectoral efforts to review progress, identify gaps and set national priorities and strategies to ensure timely delivery and coverage of prevention and care services.

Uganda needs grants and other support measures to help us intensify our response. We welcome assistance from the international community in that regard.

Even with openness, political leadership, sensitization and education, there remains the fact that a large number of people need effective medication to mitigate their suffering and to help curb opportunistic infections like malaria, pneumonia, tuberculosis and others. Counselling has to be made available to all who have experienced trauma, distress, stress and depression.

Uganda's Ministry of Health is engaging in the provision of antiretroviral drugs to prevent mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission. Programmes and activities have been developed and implemented in areas of voluntary counselling, testing and blood safety. Pharmaceutical companies have, therefore, a major role to play in that regard. These companies are already providing some assistance, which we highly appreciated. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and many other organizations should be commended for their efforts as well. We appeal to the international community, in particular the donor community, to contribute generously to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The support of development partners in planning and resource mobilization and in providing guidance is crucial in that regard.

Uganda believes that we must all work together until we achieve zero prevalence and develop a vaccine against HIV/AIDS. The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative is already working toward that goal. Behaviour has to change. Health and education, targeting the girl-child in particular, standards and delivery systems must be strengthened. Services should reach the masses through decentralization. Poverty must be reduced, especially through debt cancellation and agricultural modernization, and employment opportunities must be provided, especially for women.

In closing, Uganda concurs with the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report, and we support the proposal to devote at least one full day to discuss problems related to HIV/AIDS during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Assembly, especially at a time when we are discussing a topic that is so important to people the world over. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on progress towards the

implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. The report attempts to evaluate how far the world community has come in its fight against HIV/AIDS since the Declaration was adopted by Member States at the special session of the General Assembly in June last year. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of members of the Association of the South-East Asian Nations.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has been with us for the past two decades. It has caused untold suffering to the world community, and its toll is rising. In his address to the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, the Secretary-General had mentioned that almost 22 million people have died of AIDS worldwide and that 13 million children have been orphaned. Again, in his World AIDS Day message of 1 December 2001, the Secretary-General mentioned that, every hour of every day, almost 600 people are infected and that 60 children die of the virus every hour. In this year's report, the Secretary-General mentions that, unless there is a scaled-up effort of the global community, 45 million new infections are projected to occur between 2002 and 2010. The special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS brought together Governments, civil society and the private sectors as never before to find common resolve to fight this growing pandemic. We take heart that, following the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, there is now a new collective level of commitment.

To combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, we need to take effective action at the international, regional and national levels. May I apprise this Assembly of Myanmar's endeavours to meet the time-bound commitments set out in the Declaration, highlighting national leadership and regional collaboration, prevention by creating awareness, cooperation with United Nations agencies and the active role of non-governmental sectors in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

In Myanmar, HIV/AIDS is designated a disease of national concern, together with malaria and tuberculosis. National leadership is provided by the National Health Committee, under which the National AIDS Committee, chaired by the Minister for Health, is spearheading a programme in which all agencies of the Ministry of Health are actively engaged in HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities. Myanmar is made up of seven States and seven divisions, and each State and division has its own AIDS Committee, empowered by the National AIDS Committee. To boost regional collaboration, in November 2001 Myanmar joined the heads of Government of other countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to pledge joint leadership in the fight against AIDS. Myanmar and its neighbours are also exchanging experiences through partnerships, such as the Mekong Partnership and Beyond.

The Secretary-General in his report mentions that young people can be effective HIV prevention messengers, which is what we are doing in Myanmar. School-based Healthy HIV/AIDS Prevention Education, also known as SHAPE, has brought lifeskills-based education on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STI) to over 1.2 million Myanmar schoolchildren in over 9,000 schools. SHAPE's "spiral curriculum" combines age-appropriate information about HIV/AIDS and healthy living, with lifeskills and peer education components, for children aged seven to fifteen. SHAPE is designed in such a way that children bring what they learn in school to their families and to their communities through community activities. SHAPE has been integrated into the national curriculum and implementation is steadily growing towards the nationwide scale.

A Myanmar-language publication by the name of "100 Frequently Asked Questions" has been published and widely distributed since December 1999 and is still in great demand. The book deals with the ABCs of HIV prevention and care and also tackles complex moral questions. Since last year, sections of this publication have been regularly published in English and Myanmar-language newspapers.

To further create awareness and reduce the stigma of HIV/AIDS, the Government also uses the most popular form of the media — the television — to reach the masses through documentaries and films.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also play an active role in HIV prevention and care. National NGOs, such as the Myanmar Red Cross Society, have been implementing a community-level peer-education project for youth since 1994 and a notable national NGO, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) also conducts very successful lifeskills-based HIV/AIDS/STI training

programmes for women and youth. MMCWA also runs another type of programme, aimed at women of reproductive age, which has gained popular acceptance. We are appreciative of the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for these activities in 19 townships.

Following a joint UNICEF/United Nations Population Fund assessment of the need and feasibility of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMCT) interventions, 2001 saw the launch of two PMCT pilots projects in areas of high maternal HIV incidence, one in Tachileik and the other in Kawthaung, both of which are in the border regions. An HIV/AIDS counselling manual, with particular emphasis on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, has also been adapted for Myanmar and the Government has designed a national strategy, policies and guidelines on PMCT in close collaboration with United Nations agencies.

We are combating the global menace of HIV/AIDS nationally as a topmost priority. We take the matter very seriously. Despite that, there are those who would resort to any device to vilify my country and discredit its achievements. Using a grossly inflated estimate of 500,000 people living with HIV/AIDS, there have been frequent attempts to projecting Myanmar as a country which has done little to combat this global menace. As the facts bear out, nothing could be further from the truth. It is pertinent to note that the Ministry of Health and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in Geneva jointly held a workshop in March 2002 on estimates of people living with HIV/AIDS in my country. The outcome of the meeting was an estimate of 177,279 people living with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2001. It was also concluded that HIV infection in Myanmar was not generalized, but more concentrated in high-risk groups.

The report of the Secretary-General indicates an increase in national investments in HIV/AIDS programmes. We are happy to see that political commitment, regional collaboration, openness and engagement by non-governmental sectors have increased worldwide. However, as the Secretary-General has rightly pointed out, the implementation of national AIDS strategies in most countries has been slow, in large measure owing to a lack of resources and technical capacity. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the Global Fund.

May I conclude by urging the international community, particularly the developed countries, to continue to assist the developing countries in their fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It has cost too many lives and untold miseries. Of all human rights, the right to life is surely the most precious.

Mr. Davison (United States): Many strides have been made in the fight against HIV/AIDS since the United Nations General Assembly's special session on HIV/AIDS in June of 2001, and the United States is proud to be at the forefront of many of these efforts. But much more remains to be done. The United States will continue to work in partnership with other nations and civil society, including faith-based and community-based organizations to continue the fight and make a difference in the lives of those living with HIV and AIDS.

The most laudable achievement since the special session was held is the rapid establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. At the special session, it was still a vision to be fulfilled, as foreseen by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The special session's Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, in fact, referred to the need to ensure "that the resources provided for the global response to address HIV/AIDS are substantial, sustained and geared towards achieving results". (*A/RES/S-26/2*)

The Global Fund represents a new way of doing business. It will soon be moving significant new resources to countries to help push back the impact of these major diseases, and the United States is the single largest contributor to the Fund.

However, even with these new resources, a major challenge remains. We must all understand that this new additional and complementary support from the Global Fund, cannot displace already existing efforts. The United States has provided leadership by pledging increased resources to the Global Fund, while at the same time increasing bilateral efforts. Other donors must do the same. Expanded national, bilateral and multilateral support is needed to make the Fund successful. The resource gap will continue to be a challenge and, as have many other States in this debate, we urge that new resources from all types of donors be contributed into the Fund and other HIV/AIDS-related efforts.

The United States continues to be the single largest donor to international AIDS efforts, providing

44 per cent of bilateral assistance for international HIV/AIDS efforts, according to UNAIDS. Its monies support bilateral and multilateral programmes that prevent new infections, reduce risky behaviour and provide treatment and care for those living with HIV. The United States is also the leader in the research necessary to develop a vaccine.

In June, President George W. Bush announced a new $500 million initiative to expand Unites States efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission in 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean. The initiative's goal is to treat 1 million women and reduce mother-to-child transmission by 40 per cent within five years. This programme will be in addition to already existing United States HIV/AIDS assistance programmes.

The United States, however, is doing more than simply providing funding and carrying out research. The Bush Administration has appointed the first United States ambassador with a health mandate, Dr. Jack Chow, who is Secretary of State Colin Powell's special representative on HIV/AIDS. We are actively pursuing a diplomatic strategy involving Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Secretary Powell and Secretary Thompson of Health and Human Services are working closely to lead United States efforts to fight AIDS worldwide; the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of Health and Human Services are more engaged than ever in addressing the global multifaceted impact of HIV/AIDS.

Despite these efforts, however, the decades to come threaten to be far worse than those that have already passed. The recent National Intelligence Council report on the next wave of the epidemic clearly indicates that as an international community we must take action now if we are to slow the epidemic's exponential growth.

We urge States that have not already done so to work to meet the targets set by the General Assembly's twenty-sixth special session on HIV/AIDS. We look forward to a full review of progress on meeting the goals of the special session at the General Assembly in 2003. Despite increased education and public awareness, taboo and stigma remain formidable obstacles to effective responses. Political leadership from all of us is crucial in making a difference in combating the stigma and discrimination that have accompanied the epidemic worldwide. Parents and families are critical. Religious and community leaders must be involved. Nations must work actively to address gender and age-based dimensions of the epidemic, and to eliminate discrimination and marginalization.

The United States believes that public-private partnerships are vital to combat HIV and AIDS. It is only through the combination of public and private efforts that we will be able to confront the challenges ahead. The United States will continue to offer financial and technical assistance to achieve these targets.

Finally, we must continue to heed the lessons learned from the past two decades. We know that a balanced and integrated approach, in a continuum that includes prevention, treatment and care, is vital, as is a solid commitment to sound public health infrastructure.

The United States is strongly committed to continuing its leadership and working with the international community to save lives by preventing new infections of HIV, helping people already infected, and contributing to the search for a cure. We believe that by working together we can, and will, make a difference.

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau (Viet Nam), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Shimmura (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his strong leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS and for the extensive and informative report on the follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session. I also would like to commend the efforts made by UNAIDS and its sponsors in meeting the targets set out in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Piot, the Executive Director of UNAIDS, told us that since the special session, progress has been made in three key areas: leadership, partnership, and resources. This is a major achievement for the international community. Of these elements, we think that leadership, at all levels in both the public and private sectors, is the most important in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

There are on the other hand, worrying signs that the epidemic, which spares no part of the world, is continuing to spread. The Asian region, for example, is experiencing a rapid increase in HIV prevalence rates.

Because of its vast population, even a low prevalence in Asia means a large number of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. We must therefore strengthen our efforts to stop and reverse the spread of the epidemic in this region as soon as possible.

There are a number of practices that have proven effective, such as those being used in Thailand, which include prevention measures targeting vulnerable populations, education programmes aimed at youth and support for activities by non-governmental organizations. It is important that those best practices be utilized by other countries of the region. In this context, the Government of Japan announced last year the establishment of the Japan-ASEAN Information and Human Network for Infectious Diseases Control to support human resources development in the area of HIV/AIDS.

My Government believes that, as the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS states, prevention must be the mainstay of our response. But at the same time, we think that care and support, to be provided through basic health infrastructure, are closely linked to effective prevention. Provision of care and support in accordance with local conditions, including voluntary and confidential testing, must be promoted as an effective tool to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

There has been a notable decline in the prices of antiretroviral drugs since last year, and that has contributed to the improvement of access to treatment in developing countries. We appreciate the efforts made by the United Nations in this regard. We believe in comprehensive care and treatment for those infected by HIV/AIDS, including treatment of opportunistic infections such as tuberculosis. What is needed is continuous patient education, psychological and social support from their families and communities and a sound health infrastructure.

At the G-8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000, Japan announced the Okinawa Infectious Diseases Initiative, a $3 billion programme to enhance support for combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases in developing countries. It has five elements: vertical and horizontal approaches, including improvement of water and sanitation and basic education; partnerships with civil society, donors and international organizations; institution-building and human resources development; South-South cooperation; and research capacity and activities. To date, my Government has provided assistance of approximately $1 billion under this initiative.

We welcome the establishment in January this year of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which was proposed at the special session on HIV/AIDS and at the G-8 Genoa Summit last June. Japan is making a contribution of $200 million to the Fund in the hope that it will strengthen global measures to combat infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS. My Government, as vice-chair of the Board of the Fund, is committed to working to enable the Fund to provide the maximum possible support for infectious disease control measures in developing countries.

Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand): HIV/AIDS is a global problem. Indeed, it remains a major transnational threat that the international community has a shared responsibility to deal with urgently and resolutely.

It is a welcome sign that HIV/AIDS has truly been made a part of the international agenda. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS since the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly in June last year, the international community has passed a turning point in its global response to HIV/AIDS. Global awareness of this scourge has been growing, and resources allocated to tackle it have been on the rise, both nationally and internationally. The establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a significant step in this regard. Thailand appreciates the role of the United Nations, particularly the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), in the progress made so far, as well as the personal attention of the Secretary-General in making HIV/AIDS a priority of the United Nations.

However, it is equally true that the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to get worse, including in Asia, where the epidemic continues to spread. Hence, much more needs to be done without delay if we are to save the millions of lives that will perish due to this epidemic and the millions more that will become infected and affected by it. Also, many more resources are required to meet the needs particularly of developing countries, which are home to more than 95 per cent of the more than 60 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. More research must be carried out to find effective cures and vaccines.

A report appearing in *The New York Times* this morning is encouraging. It said that yesterday the Food and Drug Administration approved a test that can detect in as little as 20 minutes whether someone is infected with HIV. Standard tests currently take two days to two weeks.

The political momentum must be translated into concrete action. An effective response to HIV/AIDS requires a concerted and comprehensive approach in addressing the various aspects of the epidemic: prevention, care, treatment and support, research and development and strategies to address the specific situations of vulnerable groups and the human rights of people with HIV/AIDS. Also essential are strong leadership at all levels and the full and active involvement of all sectors of society.

In Thailand's experience, much of our success in curbing the trend of HIV/AIDS is due to the contribution of civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and, not least, United Nations agencies, particularly UNAIDS and its co-sponsors. Indeed, national ownership and partnerships are indispensable elements in the fight against HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS must be made a part of the national agenda and be integrated as a cross-cutting issue into our efforts aiming at achieving sustainable development.

Thailand's national plans for the prevention and alleviation of HIV/AIDS have been developed and implemented in this spirit. The current plan, which covers the period between 2002 and 2006, also adopts a human-centred approach and emphasizes building the capacity of individuals, families, communities and the administrative system to deal with HIV/AIDS. Efforts undertaken at the national, provincial, district and community levels by Government agencies, NGOs, including the organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS, and the private sector are implemented under the auspices of the national AIDS prevention and alleviation committee. The major networks of NGOs working on AIDS and of organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS are also represented in that national committee.

In terms of policy and implementation, prevention remains the mainstay of our response to roll back HIV/AIDS. The Thai Government has set the target of reducing the rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence among people of reproductive age — between the ages of 15 and 49 — to less than 1 per cent by 2006. Young people are the main target group in our prevention efforts, which include not only awareness-raising campaigns but also sexual and reproductive health education and voluntary counselling and testing. We also strive to promote access to HIV prevention among hard-to-reach groups, including injecting drug users and migrant workers. The programme promoting 100 per cent condom use — which began in 1989 and resulted in a substantial reduction of HIV transmission among the high-risk population — has continued, and its focus has expanded beyond commercial sex workers. At the same time, we continue to pursue the nationwide intervention against mother-to-child transmission.

With regard to care, support and treatment, the Government continues to promote broader access to treatment. Already, treatment of common opportunistic infections, such as tuberculosis and pneumonia, is covered under the national universal health coverage programme. By 2004, we aim to integrate antiretroviral treatment into the programme. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will also be developed to ensure the programme's effectiveness. In addition, we promote continuing support and training for health professionals and caregivers in all sectors — including non-governmental organizations — and for community volunteers, as well as for people living with HIV/AIDS.

However, efforts to provide access to affordable treatment for those in need also require support from the international community. In that regard, Thailand hopes that the agreement reached by the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference on intellectual property rights and public health, held at Doha last year, will be implemented to benefit people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly those in developing countries.

The human rights of those living with HIV/AIDS must be respected and promoted to ensure that they live their lives as do other members of society. It is important that we address seriously the problem of AIDS-related stigma and social exclusion. Thailand's policy in that regard emphasizes awareness-raising among families and communities and provides support for organizations dealing with HIV/AIDS issues, including community activities that involve people living with HIV/AIDS. The rights of people living with HIV/AIDS have also been incorporated into the policy and the work of the National Human Rights Commission.

HIV/AIDS undermines economic and social development. It threatens security, and, if left to spread unabated, it can even jeopardize the survival of societies. The enormity and the multidimensional character of HIV/AIDS require concerted actions by the international community. Cooperation is not only desirable, but also imperative. In that regard, Thailand has been collaborating with its neighbours and friends in and outside the region in the subregional, regional and international contexts. In November 2001, Thailand, together with other member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), pledged at the highest level our resolve to fight HIV/AIDS. Last January, Thailand also hosted the Intersessional Meeting of the Human Security Network on Human Security and HIV/AIDS, focusing on cooperation aimed at tackling HIV/AIDS in the Mekong subregion. Moreover, we are honoured to play host to the Fifteenth International AIDS Conference, which will be held in July 2004. We stand ready to cooperate with all concerned to ensure productive deliberations and a fruitful Conference outcome.

The international community, with common resolve, set noble goals during the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly. As the first set of those targets will be due next year, the Assembly's debate on this agenda item will be a particularly important platform for reviewing the progress we have made and for setting our future course of action. It is Thailand's fervent hope that, by then, we shall all have moved much closer, with ever stronger commitment and perseverance, to attaining our common objective of putting an end to the tragedy of HIV/AIDS that faces humanity.

Mr. Andrianarivelo-Razafy (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure for me to take the floor here today and, like previous speakers, to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive and very detailed report on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (A/57/227 and Corr.1). I also wish to thank all the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and the entities of the private sector and of civil society, as well as non-governmental organizations, for their efforts to fight HIV/AIDS.

The special session of the General Assembly devoted to HIV/AIDS, held in 2001, enabled the international community to assess the worldwide spread of the AIDS pandemic, considered the greatest threat to humanity. The Assembly realized that it was essential, in focusing seriously on issues related to AIDS, to see its catastrophic effects on all aspects of social and economic life. The Declaration of Commitment, adopted by States at the special session, reflects global concern and the resolve of nations to act to combat this terrible scourge.

We must recall that, every day, nearly 14,000 children are infected by AIDS and that 1.2 per cent of persons aged 15 to 49 are living with AIDS. In the light of the extent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic — which has already taken too heavy a toll on Africa and the rest of the world — the efforts undertaken thus far are proving insufficient. In fact, while most countries have already formulated national strategies to fight AIDS, the implementation of the recommended measures continues to be limited by a lack of resources and technical means. Poverty, worsened by the debt burden, prevents States — in particular developing countries — from giving priority to combating AIDS in their development programmes, while the infection rate among young people and women continues to increase.

Many factors should be taken into consideration to make the fight against AIDS effective. In that connection, there must be a more organized data collection system capable of classifying data by category, based on cause of infection, and thus of determining means of prevention. We must also develop research into new approaches towards fighting stigmatization, discrimination and exclusion with regard to persons living with AIDS in order to reduce their vulnerability, especially among women. Such persons can play an essential role in the fight against AIDS in terms of information and awareness, and they can contribute to the formulation of strategies to prevent and treat the disease. In that context, we consider it urgent to strengthen the fight against drug abuse among young people and to effectively implement international instruments related to the rights of children, with a view to protecting them from sexual exploitation, paedophilia, rape and all other crimes of that nature.

Madagascar welcomes the decision taken by most countries to increase their budgets to finance anti-AIDS programmes, whether at national, bilateral, multilateral or private levels. We particularly welcome the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. However, my delegation

cannot fail to express its concern over the amount raised to date — $2 billion, which is not even a third of the budgetary objective of approximately $10 billion by the year 2005. In that connection, despite many challenges, Madagascar will spare no effort to honour, within the means at its disposal, its share of the contributions to the Global Fund. We take this opportunity to appeal to all donors and assistance providers to increase their contributions, since AIDS is a global problem.

Moreover, Madagascar considers it urgent to cancel the debt of the highly indebted poor countries so that they can increase their commitment to the fight against AIDS. It would also be good to advocate financial participation on the part of the international community not in the form of loans but as grants toward the countries most affected by AIDS, and in particular countries of Africa and Asia. It is regrettable to note that on these two continents only 60,000 persons are receiving antiretroviral drugs. Madagascar believes that it is of the highest importance to step up and accelerate negotiations with private pharmaceutical companies so that those medicines can be more accessible to the sick in low-income countries.

Aware of the devastating effects of the AIDS pandemic on its socio-economic development and its security, Africa has made a resolute commitment to waging war against this scourge on all fronts. All African countries have, therefore, elaborated national strategies to fight AIDS and a greater number of initiatives to fight AIDS have proliferated at the regional and subregional levels, pursuant to the purposes and objectives of the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and other Related Infectious Diseases.

Madagascar hopes that initiatives taken by African leaders in the framework of the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development to develop partnerships at the global level to effectively fight against pandemics, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, will enjoy the firm support of the international community in order to attain the international human development objectives.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development at Johannesburg recognized the impact of AIDS-weakened performance in the economic and social areas at the international level as well as in society, families and individuals. It also highlighted the struggle against AIDS and recommended concentrating efforts on the population in order to achieve sound development of human resources. My delegation believes that there is a need to expand the areas of intervention, in particular with regard to prevention, and that the fight against AIDS should not be solely the responsibility of Ministries of Health but should involve all in all sectors.

Convinced as we are that the joint response against AIDS requires coordinated action in the framework of solid partnerships, Madagascar intends to participate in this crusade as a member of the partnership against AIDS in the Indian Ocean region, established early in 2002.

At the national level, after detecting the first AIDS case in Madagascar in 1987, the Government established bodies for the elaboration and implementation of three short- and medium-term plans. The national committee to fight HIV/AIDS under the aegis of the President was established by decree in October 2002 and it replaces the old national coordination unit. The severity and complexity of the AIDS epidemic, the many sectors and actors involved, the present Government policy of granting autonomy to the provinces and the need to expand the national response to the AIDS epidemic all provide justification for updating the institutional framework and adapting it to the requirements of the many sectors involved and decentralization on the basis of lessons learned. The coordination offered by the national coordination office has been replaced by the executive secretariat of the national committee to fight AIDS.

The political legal framework and the particular case of persons living with AIDS and AIDS orphans should strengthen the fight against this disease. The management of information and financial resources are two pillars of this institutional framework. The Government of Madagascar has also undertaken to establish a more reliable system of information covering circulation and conservation and to determine what kind of financing mechanisms can ensure the availability of resources at the local level and the involvement of the beneficiaries in managing those resources.

In its efforts, the Government is prepared to mobilize and take the necessary measures to ensure that persons living with HIV receive psychosocial services.

In order to have effective decentralization in this battle, provincial AIDS committees will be set up in the autonomous provinces to ensure supervision and coordination of the national strategic plan in all implementing agencies so as to ensure integrated planning and budgeting of the activities to fight AIDS at the provincial level and to ensure the reporting of data to the executive secretariat. Similar local committees will be established at the community level.

In conclusion, the meagre results obtained since the Declaration call for increased mobilization by the international community to stem the alarming spread of AIDS. AIDS is an enemy to be feared, but it is not invincible if we devote all of our energies and make AIDS a priority on an equal footing with the maintenance of peace and security.

Mr. Oratmangun (Indonesia): At the outset let me thank the Secretary-General for his timely report on this very important subject. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the ASEAN countries.

According to the United Nations AIDS report issued in July 2002, 40 million people across the globe are now infected with the HIV virus, while 25 million have already died. If left unchecked, the rate of infection will increase, with 45 million new infections before the end of the decade. AIDS has already devastated large parts of Africa; 11 million of the 14 million AIDS orphans in the world are located in Africa.

In addition, the data shows that one of the regions that is experiencing the most rapid growth in new HIV/AIDS infections is Asia. If HIV/AIDS infection rates in Asia are allowed to reach the levels of sub-Saharan Africa, the number of infected individuals worldwide would number over 100 million people. There are many who feel that in the absence of concerted and sustained global efforts to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, the grim figures I have quoted are in fact optimistic, and the massive growth of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will begin to pose a serious threat to the world economy, and global peace and security.

On the bright side, the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment at the United Nations General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 provides a new momentum for the international community to combat this devastating epidemic. It marks a turning point in the struggle against HIV/AIDS by setting time-bound targets to prevent and treat this disease. There is hope if we take action. It is estimated that 63 per cent of the new infections predicted between now and 2010 can be prevented.

Today's session is also of momentous importance, since we will deliberate what follow up actions are necessary to implement last year's Declaration of Commitment. Indonesia is encouraged by the fact that so many countries have already implemented national AIDS strategies, but Indonesia also notes with concern that the implementation of those strategies, especially in the low- and middle-income countries, is in jeopardy owing to a lack of resources and technical capacity. In order to mount an effective global response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic there must be concrete political commitment, genuine cooperation and concerted action by all, at all levels and across all sectors. A prerequisite, if the international community wishes to eliminate this global curse, is strong leadership that will mobilise the additional, substantial and sustained resources necessary to eradicate HIV/AIDS.

It is of particular importance to note that, in order to fight the epidemic in the low- and middle-income countries, spending will have to double to over $6 billion by next year, and to more than $10 billion by 2005. This does not include the funds needed to improve basic health-care infrastructures. Therefore, particularly for low and middle-income countries, international cooperation is needed to implement the Declaration of Commitment in order to combat HIV/AIDS.

Indonesia is therefore actively seeking to cooperate with its international, regional and global partners to fight AIDS. In November 2001, Indonesia, along with its Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional partners, issued a joint declaration on cooperation in the combat against AIDS, including fighting drug use.

For years the infection rate for HIV/AIDS in Indonesia and in many other Asian nations remained negligible, but in recent years the twin curses of intravenous drug use and HIV/AIDS have been spreading in Indonesia and throughout the region. At present, it is estimated that there are about 120,000 HIV/AIDS cases in Indonesia, which is still less than

0.1 per cent of the population, but the risk of widespread infection is present.

Indonesia recognized the potential for this disease to grow unchecked, and as early as 1994 initiated a national programme to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS that included the establishment of a national AIDS Prevention and Control Commission. The AIDS prevention programme included AIDS education, prevention, testing, treatment, research, and monitoring of the progress of the programme. It also delineated roles for various levels of Government and civil society, and it acknowledged the need for external assistance and cooperation. In addition, earlier this year, in line with the Declaration of Commitment, Indonesia reinvigorated its efforts to fight the twin curses of AIDS and drugs through presidential decrees, which included the launching of a national movement against AIDS and efforts to fight drug abuse.

The national programme also acknowledged the role of the community, especially the family, in the prevention of the disease and in caring for those already infected. A third of those suffering from HIV/AIDS are aged 15 to 24, and new infections typically occur at the highest rates for people in this age range. The family plays a key role in teaching young people to avoid unsafe activity and about the importance of prevention. In addition, especially in developing countries, the family is the main source of care for those already infected, and so the Indonesian national programme includes efforts to destigmatize infected persons and maintain their full integration into society.

One of the most important issues is that of HIV/AIDS-related drugs. Improving the affordability of, and access to, these drugs is critical to the fight against HIV/AIDS in developing countries with limited resources. Research must be funded in the developing countries, so that cures and treatments that are affordable and acceptable to local populations can be found. For developing countries, this is a critical issue; life-saving drugs will not save any lives if the sick have no access to them due to lack of money.

In conclusion, combating HIV/AIDS is one of our Millennium Development Goals, and therefore one of the most important objectives of the international community. The struggle against HIV/AIDS is, appropriately, one of international concern that requires international action, because this disease does not respect international boundaries. Any solution to the HIV/AIDS problem must solve the problem for all of humanity, rich and poor alike.

Ms. Kapalata (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, I would like express the appreciation of my delegation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/57/227) on the progress made towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. The report, which is based on responses to a questionnaire sent to Member States, provides useful insights into the activities of Member States towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. We are equally appreciative of this opportunity to discuss the matter of follow-up in the Assembly. It is our hope that the outcome of our deliberations will take us one step forward in our struggle against the deadly pandemic.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement just made by the representative of Senegal on behalf of the African States. The holding of the special session on HIV/AIDS was indeed a turning point in the two-decade history of the pandemic. The international community had to respond to an emergency whose import it had largely ignored for too long.

When the General Assembly adopted the Declaration of Commitment in June last year, it noted with profound concern that, at the end of the year 2000, 36.1 million people worldwide would be living with HIV/AIDS and that 75 per cent of them would be found in sub-Saharan Africa; today the figure is estimated at more than $40 million. The Declaration of Commitment therefore set target dates for the accomplishment of goals in the areas of leadership, resources, prevention, care, support, treatment and partnership, among others.

It is already evident that the epidemic is getting worse, thus suggesting that responses have not been commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. Interventions have obviously been on a smaller scale than that demanded by the pandemic. Unless we step up our interventions, the pandemic — and here I paraphrase the Executive Director of UNAIDS — will not defeat itself.

This grim picture notwithstanding, I wish to state here that my Government remains fully committed to the war against HIV/AIDS and reaffirms its resolve to implement the Declaration of Commitment. In this regard, the President in 1998 declared HIV/AIDS a

national disaster requiring the full participation of the entire Tanzanian community to combat it. In terms of leadership, my Government has provided the strong leadership that was needed. In this connection, the National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS prevention and control was prepared. The Plan defines the framework for an expanded multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS for a period of five years — 1998-2002.

Furthermore, immediately after the special session in 2001, the President declared that "we have prepared ourselves for a possible victory against this terrible scourge". This statement was made against the backdrop of a national policy on HIV/AIDS that had already been put in place to provide the general framework for the national response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The national policy outlines the role of various sectors in the prevention, care and support of HIV/AIDS victims and spells out the ethics and principles involved in counselling and testing and in protecting the rights of people living with the disease. The national policy also outlines the mandate and functions of the Tanzania Commission for AIDS, which was formed in 2000. The Commission works in close collaboration with the National Advisory Board on AIDS and other bodies to spearhead a comprehensive national response by both the public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, families and individuals.

My Government has identified the obstacles in the war against the pandemic as being rampant ignorance, fear of the disease and stigmatization, and, most importantly, the prevalence of poverty. Poverty lays the foundation for the spread of HIV/AIDS and significantly influences and fuels the spread and impact of the disease. It creates vulnerability to HIV infections, causes rapid progression of the infection in the individual due to malnutrition, and effectively limits access to social and health-care services. This is as true for the individual as it is for the country. The poverty factor therefore has to be addressed not only at the household level, but also at the national level.

It is against this background that my delegation notes with concern the assertion in the report of the Secretary-General that the global response to the Global Fund has so far yielded only one third of the amount required to meet the goal of annual expenditures of about $10 billion by the year 2005. It is amply manifested that without new and additional resources, most of our Governments will achieve neither the Millennium Development Goals nor those contained in the Declaration of Commitment. It is for this reason that my delegation strongly supports the recommendation contained in paragraph 93 of the Secretary-General's report (A/57/227) that

> "In order to ensure an effective response to HIV/AIDS, the international community is urged to increase assistance significantly to countries which do not have sufficient resources for interventions, the strengthening of sustainable human capacity, systems development and capacity-building."

The partnership between my Government and other partners in combating HIV/AIDS has grown over the years. We have collaborated with the United Nations system through its agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Population Fund, to mention just a few. In this connection, I would like to pay tribute to UNICEF and WHO for the ongoing pilot project on mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS in my country. We value this assistance as a big step towards attaining the goal of reducing the proportion of infants infected with HIV/AIDS and also as an important contribution towards the care, support and treatment of HIV/AIDS-infected women, who are disproportionately affected by the pandemic and who bear the brunt of HIV/AIDS-related stigma.

In this regard, we wholeheartedly support the recommendation of the Secretary-General in calling on United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in particular the co-sponsoring agencies of UNAIDS and the UNAIDS secretariat, to further expand their support for HIV/AIDS efforts with a view to transforming effective interventions into large-scale projects.

The existence of non-governmental organizations that involve themselves in caring for and supporting people living with HIV/AIDS in my country is a welcome development. Both the Government and civil society have realized that it is in their best interests to work together. My Government has pledged partnership with responsible non-governmental organizations, particularly in educating the community and in spreading the message in the war against HIV/AIDS. In this regard, leaders of faith-based

organizations have proved invaluable. It is the intention of my Government to continue to encourage this partnership, particularly in removing the barrier of silence and stigmatization.

The challenge ahead of us is a serious one. Dealing with the pandemic requires serious determination and innovative approaches. Some of us are operating in circumstances in which the health system is already overburdened and in which treatment on $1 a day is proving to be a challenge.

It is therefore incumbent upon all of us, individually and collectively, to enhance international cooperation, intensify research into the pandemic, continue providing the leadership required and stay focused on the goals set out in the Millennium Declaration and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. My Government is determined to win the war against HIV/AIDS, and we are confident that, with the collaboration and cooperation of all stakeholders and the international community, the war can be won.

Mr. Brereton (Australia): Australia was pleased to take part, in June 2001, in the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS. The special session signalled the world's recognition of the grave impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

We know that the number of people infected with HIV/AIDS across the globe will grow significantly through this decade. Australia is especially concerned about the spread of the epidemic into Asia and the Pacific. The epidemic in Asia threatens to become the largest in the world. It is estimated that by 2010, China may have 10 million to 15 million HIV/AIDS cases, and India between 20 million and 25 million — the highest estimate for any country.

By the end of the decade, the spread of HIV/AIDS in Asia will have eclipsed the projected 30 million to 35 million cases in Central and Southern Africa, the current focal point of the epidemic. In some Asian countries there are localized pockets of HIV/AIDS — among intravenous drug users and sex workers for example. We cannot be complacent in view of the possibility that these pockets of infection will grow rapidly and spread to the general population.

In the Pacific, Papua New Guinea faces a potential epidemic comparable to that experienced by African countries. Even the small Pacific island countries, so remote in so many ways, are beginning to confront HIV/AIDS.

Last year's special session was a landmark in the development of global, regional and local responses to the pandemic. Since then, further work has been done on estimating the resources required to respond to the pandemic. Another funding mechanism, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, has been established. Australia looks forward to the Fund implementing projects and achieving results on the ground.

Another development has been the reduction in the price of some treatments for HIV/AIDS. Australia welcomes the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), a number of pharmaceutical companies, non-governmental organizations and national Governments in negotiating these reductions, including through the World Trade Organization Doha negotiations.

However, much more work needs to be done. The cost of antiretroviral drugs, which can prolong the lives of infected people, is still prohibitively high in many populous, low-income countries. Moreover, drug-resistant HIV/AIDS strains may spread because of the inconsistent use of antiretroviral therapies and the manufacture of substandard medications.

Of course, drug costs are only a portion of the cost of treating HIV/AIDS. Other significant barriers include medical capacity, logistics and resources. Nor should greater attention being directed towards treatment lessen the critical focus on the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Leadership is vital to meet these challenges — leadership from Governments, from international organizations, from the private sector and from civil society. Without leadership, the fight against HIV/AIDS cannot be won. Leadership must be combined with good governance to ensure the effective delivery of the response.

Australia's own response has been significant, and we are determined to play our part, especially in the development of political leadership, regional cooperation and plans in the Asia-Pacific region.

In October 2001, Australia hosted the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Meeting on HIV/AIDS to discuss the impact of the pandemic on regional development. This successful meeting was a follow-up to the United

Nations special session and was the first of its kind, bringing together ministers and officials with a range of portfolios from 33 countries, representing over half of the world's population.

Australia is working to ensure that a second ministerial meeting to follow up the Asia-Pacific response to HIV/AIDS is held in 2003.

One outcome of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Meeting in 2001 was the establishment of the Asia Pacific Leadership Forum on HIV/AIDS and Development. The Leadership Forum, which should commence activities in early 2003, will inform leaders and provide opportunities to share information and experiences in dealing with the pandemic through a variety of programmes. The Forum, launched in Brunei in August by the Ministers of the countries members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and of Australia, has wide support among regional countries.

Australia provided funding to UNAIDS for the establishment of the Leadership Forum, and we are pleased to see that it has been supported by other donors, including the United Kingdom, Japan, the European Union, the United States and New Zealand. In addition, Australia continues to fund programmes, mainly in Asia and the Pacific, to assist countries to respond directly to the pandemic through a six-year, $200 million global HIV/AIDS initiative. Australia is prepared, if asked, to assist other Asia-Pacific Governments to develop legislation to facilitate cost-effective access to essential HIV/AIDS drugs, consistent with international trade agreements. Australia is also willing to support applied research or specific trials to help countries assess alternatives for introducing new HIV/AIDS treatments.

Australia recently reviewed its aid priorities. HIV/AIDS will continue to be a key priority for our aid programme. But all countries must continue to work to build momentum in the global response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is a humanitarian imperative.

Today Australia reaffirms its support for the priorities for action of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. We note that one third of the time-bound goals and targets identified in the Declaration are due in 2003. More will be due in 2005.

The Secretary-General's annual follow-up report on the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, detailing progress made and identifying problems and constraints, should help maintain the momentum of the international response.

However, there is still a need for better information to track the pandemic. UNAIDS has developed a set of indicators to measure progress by Member States in achieving the commitments. These indicators will serve as a valuable tool and go some way to improving knowledge of the disease, the evolution of the pandemic and responses to it.

The continuing expansion of the pandemic, especially in Asia, will spark calls for more financial and technical support from donor countries such as Australia. It may also lead to argument over how to disburse international funds, such as the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We will need to respond to these challenges in a timely and proactive way.

Finally, Australia believes that, with multiple targets set for 2003, there is value — and a good deal of value — in a full day of discussions on the follow-up of the Declaration of Commitment next year. Such a debate — we put it to the United Nations — could perhaps take place either during or following the annual general debate, and usefully could also include representatives from civil society.

Mrs. Taylor Roberts (Jamaica): The special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS marked a significant milestone in our collective response to what has been agreed as constituting a "global emergency". In the absence of a truly effective global response to this epidemic, through meaningful efforts to achieve the goals and targets set in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, social and economic development will continue to be seriously threatened, and the gains made in advancing the well-being of the world's people, significantly eroded.

Given the impact of HIV/AIDS on the productive population, it has proved particularly devastating in terms of increasing poverty and vulnerability, reversing human development and eroding the ability of Governments to provide basic social services. Indeed, the disastrous impact of the epidemic on the social and economic development of those countries that are highly affected will prove to be one of the most compelling challenges to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

We are, therefore, pleased with the progress that has been made in implementing commitments undertaken in the Declaration of Commitment, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General. We are also pleased to note that political commitment continues to increase and that most countries indicate an increase in national investment in HIV/AIDS programmes, with total spending for low and middle income countries having grown by over 50 per cent in 2002. This development is particularly important given that the epidemic cannot be reversed without substantial increases in resources.

Despite this progress, however, there is a clear indication that there continues to be a significant shortfall in overall funding for the global response. In our review of the results achieved since 2001, we see an urgent need to increase global funding, given that overall funding is still one third of the amount required to meet the goal of annual expenditures of $10 billion by 2005. The fight against HIV/AIDS can only be successful in the context of strengthened and effective partnerships. National Governments have taken significant steps aimed at strengthening their responses. However, as is clear in the report, the implementation of national strategies has been slow. There can be little doubt that progress will continue to be slow if serious constraints caused by excessive economic burdens continue to impede capacity to allocate sufficient resources to fight the disease. In order to increase the ability to address the problem, particularly in developing countries, there is a clear need for enhanced partnerships to expand resources and human and technical capacity to ensure that the scale of the country-level activities matches the gravity of the problem to be solved.

We are also concerned that only 10 to 20 per cent of people at risk of HIV infection have access to basic prevention services and that an almost indiscernible number of pregnant women, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, are reached by interventions to prevent mother-to-child transmissions. If we are to achieve success, greater effort must be made to enhance preventive services and to reduce the high cost of antiretroviral drugs, particularly in the most affected countries.

While we note in paragraph 68 of the Secretary-General's report that the total number of persons in Latin America and the Caribbean region who have access to antiretrovirals has increased, we believe that this figure remains unsatisfactory, particularly when disaggregated by States and socio-economic groupings. In this regard, we recall that the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights should no longer constitute an obstacle to the right to promote access to medicines for all.

If the goals set out in the Declaration of Commitment are to be met, there should also be greater support for national efforts to expand medical services, including palliative care and prevention and treatment of opportunistic infections. Expanded research into the development of a safe and effective vaccine should also be a priority. We are, therefore, concerned that only 1.6 per cent of all HIV/AIDS research is focused on the development of a vaccine suitable for use in sub-Saharan Africa, the worst-affected region. This clearly confirms the point that global research priorities are not sufficiently oriented towards urgent health needs in resource-constrained countries.

National leaders must take a leading role in the fight against the epidemic, including contributing to efforts to remove the stigma attached to the disease. As emphasized by the Secretary-General, in most countries where major progress has been reported, strong political leadership is a central feature. In Jamaica, political leaders have been at the forefront of our national effort to combat HIV/AIDS and have given special focus to this disease by conducting a parliamentary debate on the issue.

Since the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment, Jamaica has also increased its efforts to combat the disease, through the adoption of a comprehensive national framework involving all sectors. In December 2001, the Cabinet approved the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS for the period 2002-2006. The plan outlines an integrated national response across sectors, ensuring the participation and implementation of programmes and policies aimed at advancing the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, and the most vulnerable groups in society.

The National Plan prioritizes policy advocacy; prevention; care, treatment and support; and monitoring, surveillance and evaluation. Additionally, an inter-ministerial working group on HIV/AIDS has been established to ensure an integrated effort in the planning and monitoring of HIV/AIDS activities across line ministries and sectors. In February of this year, the Government of Jamaica, in collaboration with the

United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, developed a strategy to accelerate and expand access to comprehensive care and support for those living with the disease. This strategy seeks to build capacity at all levels in the care system, increase access to antiretroviral drugs, expand the programme for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and strengthen advocacy and resource mobilization.

Despite that progress, however, there is still a need for new laws to address the human rights of persons affected by the disease. As in other Caribbean States, which share a regional strategic approach, Jamaica is in the process of reviewing current legislation to strengthen anti-discrimination laws.

The Caribbean faces a formidable challenge, a challenge shared by many regions and most States, almost without exception. If a lesson has been learned from the report before us, it is that our effort must be collective. We have made important progress in this regard. Much, however, remains to be done in strengthening leadership, increasing resources, improving preventive strategies and enhancing care and support for those affected. These challenges must be met with the greatest urgency. We have initiated the process, but we must be unrelenting in strengthening our resolve to achieve the goals we set during the special session.

Mr. Moura (Brazil): More than a year ago, we adopted the Declaration of Commitment, which established a universal strategy to fight HIV/AIDS. The special session confirmed the leadership role of the United Nations in addressing the epidemic. The United Nations succeeded in putting together developing and developed countries, international institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to promote a common vision on this issue.

The Declaration of Commitment also highlighted how crucial international cooperation is. This outcome put an end to discussions on whether the priority should fall on prevention or treatment, whether HIV/AIDS was a human rights issue or purely a medical one, whether medicines should be made available to developing countries, and whether the response should rely on action by national Governments or on action by the international community.

The report of the Secretary-General provokes mixed feelings on the implementation of the Declaration. On the one hand, it demonstrates that the Declaration has become an invaluable reference to countries and institutions in their efforts to combat the epidemic. On the other hand, it shows that implementation has left much to be desired.

This ambivalence is visible in the area of international cooperation. The creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was an important achievement. The approval of the first projects represented a breakthrough, because they included the provision of antiretroviral drugs. Unfortunately, the Fund has not been provided with resources commensurate with its needs. Estimates by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have shown that the yearly amount necessary to combat the epidemic is $10 billion. Thus far, pledges have reached $2 billion, and are far from meeting the needs of all the projects submitted for approval.

Another area where we can see both positive and negative results is that of access to medicines. The special session stressed the importance of affordability, the production of generic drugs and differential pricing. Since then, we have made some headway. For instance, the fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) adopted the Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health, emphasizing that the Agreement

> "can and should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of WTO members' right to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all." (*WT/MIN(01)/Dec/W/2, para. 4*)

Some private companies have adopted a cooperative approach, and have offered drugs at lower prices to some developing countries. The importance of the use of generic drugs has also been acknowledged. For example, the Global Fund will encourage countries applying for grants to buy the lowest-priced medicines.

In spite of those advancements, however, we are lagging behind in our objective of increasing the treatment opportunities for people living with HIV or AIDS. The figures are alarming. Only 250,000 people in developing countries are receiving antiretroviral

therapy, out of the 6 million who should be treated with such drugs.

The results Brazil has achieved in its fight against HIV/AIDS are based on a balanced approach to prevention and treatment and on advocacy of human rights. The Brazilian Government has pursued those policies since the beginning of the epidemic, and has always counted on strong cooperation from civil society.

Prevention policies in Brazil include universal access to condoms, women's empowerment, the inclusion of issues relating to HIV/AIDS in school curricula, the implementation of programmes aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission and the development of strategies for the most vulnerable groups and those at highest risk of infection.

As far as treatment is concerned, one of the main elements of the Brazilian response is free and universal access to medicines, including antiretroviral therapy. Nowadays, nearly 120,000 people in Brazil are on antiretroviral drugs. This policy has borne fruit. The death rate has been slashed by 50 per cent, hospitalization rates have dropped by 75 per cent, and opportunistic diseases have been dramatically reduced. Over the last five years, we avoided 360,000 hospitalizations, saving $1.1 billion. In the same period, we spent $1.4 billion in antiretroviral medicines. The public health service has become less overburdened, and the provision of treatment has led us to upgrade them. If it were possible to look at this issue from merely an economic perspective, this policy would be seen as cost-effective.

The positive consequences of these policies are far-reaching. The number of people with HIV/AIDS now is half what some studies foresaw a decade ago. Since they know treatment is within their reach, people feel encouraged to undergo HIV/AIDS testing, which is confidential and voluntary. While receiving treatment, people are kept in close contact with the health system and have access to information, counselling and preventive supplies. In addition, treatment serves to reduce viral loads. For all these reasons, treatment also has a significant impact on prevention, which only reinforces the importance of an integrated approach.

This treatment policy would be much more difficult to pursue if it were not for the local production of medicines. We now produce eight generic versions of non-patented antiretroviral drugs at low cost. Effective or potential competition from local companies is making producers bring their prices down, on average by 70 per cent.

Another crucial element of our policy is respect for human rights, which has been put into practice in the two aspects highlighted in the Declaration of Commitment. First, we fight the stigma still associated with HIV/AIDS, as well as other kinds of social discrimination that help to spread the epidemic. Secondly, we put access to drugs at the core of our programme, for this is essential to achieve the full realization of the human right to enjoyment of the highest standards of physical and mental health.

Another important component of our programme is the cooperation of civil society. Over recent years, we have developed almost 2,000 projects with more than 600 non-governmental organizations.

Cooperation is a key word in the fight against the epidemic. That is why the Brazilian Government has implemented projects with Latin American, Caribbean and African countries and has offered to transfer technology to developing countries. Brazil has also been a member of the Global Fund since its inception.

While all those policies are fundamental, a more effective solution to the problem will only be achieved with the development of vaccines. Brazil is now investing in setting up the infrastructure necessary to participate more actively in the testing of vaccines.

The history of the response to HIV/AIDS is similar to that of Sisyphus, the mythological character whose task it was to push a stone uphill, only to see it roll down when he reached the top. The fight against HIV/AIDS is ceaseless. The accomplishment of an objective immediately leads to another challenge.

When we met last year to adopt the Declaration of Commitment, our objective was to adopt a common vision on how to fight the epidemic. Now the challenge consists of turning our commitments into reality. The means to combat the epidemic already exist. If we do not use them, we will transform a human tragedy into a moral one.

In the present uphill journey, implementation must be our urgent challenge.

Ms. Ndhlovu (South Africa): I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the President on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly.

My delegation wishes to convey its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, as contained in document A/57/227. We also wish to express our appreciation to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for its continued commitment to assisting Member States with this global pandemic.

We are encouraged by the efforts and the progress reported on implementing measures to reduce HIV/AIDS infection, and we wish to convey our strongest support for the regular evaluation of the global response to HIV/AIDS.

South Africa is a proud signatory to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted on 27 June 2001. The Declaration echoed the national commitments of South Africa to fight HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, tuberculosis and malaria, as enunciated in my Government's current strategic plan.

Subsequent conferences, including the World Summit on Sustainable Development, addressed HIV/AIDS by adopting key actions. The goals and objectives contained in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS were reaffirmed and strengthened through that integrated approach.

My Government also responded to the request of the UNAIDS secretariat earlier this year to report on progress at the national level since the twenty-sixth special session on HIV/AIDS, in preparation for today's debate.

When we speak of follow-up and implementation of the outcome of the special session, allow me to briefly highlight progress made at the national level. The South African Cabinet, in its statement of 17 April 2002, expressed its resolve to fully implement the priorities and programmes contained in the HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections Strategic Plan for South Africa, 2000-2005, which comprises four key areas; namely prevention; treatment, care and support; human and legal rights and research, monitoring and surveillance.

The South Africa Government has earmarked the necessary financial resources. In the current financial year 2002-2003 it has allocated 1 billion rands to the fight against HIV/AIDS and related diseases. In the next financial year that amount will increase to 1.3 billion rands, and in the subsequent year to 1.8 billion rands. Those funds are channelled primarily through the Departments of Health, Education and Social Development.

Government departments have implemented HIV/AIDS policies related to health insurance, service benefits, discrimination, stigma, leave and productivity. Government departments also include poverty alleviation strategies as part of their instituted HIV/AIDS programmes.

Through a partnership with the private sector in South Africa, industries, such as the mining, transport and hospitality sectors in particular, have established workplace programmes to deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Business initiatives are increasing with the recent launch of South Africa's first comprehensive HIV/AIDS workplace solution, which manages the health of HIV-positive employees and implements preventative strategies to reduce new infections on behalf of medium- to large-size organizations and transfers the risk from the employer to the insurer.

Furthermore, South Africa has developed a programme for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission. The pilot phase will cover more than 100,000 women in its first year. At the end of the pilot phase, ending this December, the programme will be implemented throughout South Africa.

In addition, a new programme to provide a package of care, including antiretroviral therapy, to survivors of rape has been instituted, and a bill was approved for submission to Parliament on compulsory HIV testing of alleged sexual offenders, which provides for a speedy and uncomplicated mechanism for victims of sexual offences to apply for the alleged perpetrator to be tested for HIV/AIDS, with the results disclosed to the victim.

Through the Department of Social Development, activities relating to the support of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are coordinated. They include the provision of social grants, as well as the distribution of food parcels. We have also allocated additional resources amounting to 450 million rands over three years, targeted at children infected and affected by the epidemic. That includes, inter alia, a comprehensive approach to caring for orphans, as well as accelerating the implementation of a life-skills programme as a compulsory element of the curriculum in schools.

Civil society and community participation, through volunteerism and assistance to orphans and persons living with HIV/AIDS, increases on a daily basis. We are encouraged by the response from South Africans to the call for help in a spirit of oneness.

My delegation takes note of the recommendations issued in document A/57/227 and supports the Secretary-General's recommendations to appeal once again to the international community to increase assistance significantly to countries lacking sufficient resources.

It is also our view that the global HIV/AIDS research programmes for a safe and effective preventive vaccine should remain a global priority. In this regard, the South African Medical Research Council will initiate South Africa's first HIV/Aids vaccine trials early next year. The first phase of the trials could start as early as February, on condition that enough volunteers make themselves available. The trials will be done in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University in the United States and other chosen sites.

The Secretary-General, in his report, also identifies a key element that many countries face in dealing with the pandemic — building capacity to enhance effective interventions. South Africa has to deal with large numbers of persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and we need vast resources, particularly human and financial resources.

Like many other countries in Africa, we, too, struggle with the challenge of having insufficient capacities, especially in our health sector and in our communities. Training community health workers to promote prevention and to provide home-based care and counselling for HIV/AIDS patients poses a constant challenge.

One of the important outcomes of the special session was the establishment of the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria as a financing mechanism for additional resources. The Global Fund was born out of the understanding that more than $10 billion are required yearly to address HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases. My delegation notes with some concern that, to date, only $2 billion have been committed to the Fund. It is the view of my delegation that, in order to progress in implementing the special session's Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Fund must be strengthened and the process and procedures related to accessing resources through successful applications of the Global Fund should be accelerated.

In conclusion, the African Union has identified HIV/AIDS as a critical challenge that requires total commitment at all levels of society. Africa has been actively engaged on this issue. The leaders of our continent and Governments have met on numerous occasions to pledge their political commitment to protect and prevent this and other infectious diseases in Africa.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development deals extensively with the issue of development and health, including HIV/AIDS and related diseases, and emphasizes the need to reduce the root causes of the pandemic, such as underdevelopment, poverty and limited access to resources.

Finally, the motto of the multisectoral programme on HIV/AIDS in South Africa is "All our actions count". South Africans all agree that more must be done to curb the huge human tragedy unfolding in my country. My delegation would like to suggest that, as a global forum, taking into account all partners identified in the Declaration, we as a collective adopt this motto as a way forward: "All our actions count".

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to draw members' attention to the draft resolution contained in document A/57/L.13/Rev.1, entitled "Open-ended panel of the General Assembly on 'Afghanistan: one year later'", issued under agenda items 21 (d) — "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan" — and 37 — "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security".

The General Assembly will take action on that draft resolution on Monday, 11 November, in the afternoon as the second item.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.46

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

46th plenary meeting
Monday, 11 November 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda Item 14

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/57/278)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.14)

Amendment (A/57/L.17)

The President: I hope that we can conclude consideration of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency today, including an important vote on the draft resolution. I would now like to invite the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei to present the report of the agency for the year 2001.

Mr. ElBaradei: Since the establishment in 1957 of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), we have been dedicated to the achievement and promotion of a vision "Atoms For Peace" — on the one hand, the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation, with the aim of their eventual elimination, and on the other, the sharing of safe and secure nuclear technologies in peaceful applications that benefit humankind. I will speak briefly today about the IAEA's progress in working toward those goals.

The urgent need for sustained human development will clearly necessitate increases in the supply of energy in the coming decades. Nuclear power continues to be a significant contributor to the world's electricity supply, and is the only source that can provide electricity on a large scale with comparatively minimal impact on the environment. In 2001, nuclear power supplied 16.2 per cent of the world's electricity, up from 15.9 per cent in 2000. This increase was mainly due to continuing improvements in the management of nuclear power plants.

With regard to the construction of new plants, Asia and Eastern Europe remain the centres of expansion. At the beginning of 2002, 17 of the 32 nuclear power plants under construction globally were in four States — China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea — with the Russian Federation and Eastern Europe accounting for an additional 10 units. Some important developments have also taken place recently in Western Europe and North America. The United States Government is committed to work with the nuclear industry to have a new nuclear plant operating in this country before the end of the decade. This would be the first decision to build a new nuclear plant in this country since the 1970s. In May, the Finnish Parliament ratified the Government's favourable decision-in-principle to build a fifth nuclear power plant. This is also the first decision to build a new reactor in Western Europe in 15 years, and contrasts with past decisions in Belgium, Germany and Sweden to phase out nuclear energy.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-68429 (E)

In the light of this renewed interest in nuclear power, a key challenge for the industry will be to prove that available new designs address the often-expressed concerns about nuclear power. Work is being carried out on many new designs that aim to produce electricity at an enhanced level of safety and with improved economic competitiveness. Some designs include additional goals, such as producing potable water at minimal cost, incinerating long-lived radioactive waste and reducing plutonium stockpiles.

The IAEA continues to encourage technology development and innovation, for example, through its International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). INPRO is currently working with both developed and developing countries to understand and define the requirements of future potential users of nuclear power, in areas such as safety, non-proliferation, waste disposal, infrastructure capabilities and economics.

With respect to the management and disposal of spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste — a major point of public concern with respect to nuclear power — I am pleased to report that some important progress has taken place in the past 12 months. In the United States, the President and the Congress approved have already the selection of the Yucca Mountain site as a repository for high-level waste and spent fuel. Sweden has begun geological investigation of candidate sites for a spent fuel repository. Thus, together with Finland's decision last year to go forward with a deep disposal facility near the Olkiluoto nuclear power plant, it is likely that by the end of the next decade, one or more high level waste repositories will be in operation. This is essential to gaining public acceptance and confidence through demonstrating that technologically and environmentally sound waste disposal solutions exist and are actually working.

Late last year, the Agency launched a new initiative to assist member States in their efforts to move forward with the disposal of high-level and long-lived radioactive wastes through a "network of centres of excellence" for training and for demonstration of disposal technologies in underground research facilities. This network, built initially around facilities made available by the Governments of Canada and Belgium, has now expanded to include underground facilities in Switzerland and the United States. To date, 19 developing member States have indicated an interest in training scientists through the network.

Nuclear technologies in many areas other than nuclear power provide preferred solutions — and sometimes the only solutions — to economic and social problems. As the Agency reported at the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development, of the more than $500 million worth of technical cooperation provided by the IAEA in the last ten years, more than 800 projects, valued at over $200 million, have specifically supported Agenda 21 priorities such as land and agriculture, human health and fresh water. I would point out that one of the conclusions of the Summit emphasized the need to ensure capacity building, and the transfer and use of modern technology as a prerequisite for development. The IAEA is contributing energetically to this effort.

Many of the IAEA's developing member States have given high priority to the introduction or upgrading of radiotherapy services. Radiotherapy is used with curative or palliative benefit for over 50 per cent of cancer patients in industrialized countries. However, fully two thirds of global tele-therapy equipment serves the populations of these countries while the remaining one third is stretched among the remaining 5.5 billion people. We expect, therefore, that requests for assistance will increase, especially given our recent successes in initiating radiotherapy programmes in developing member States such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Mongolia, Namibia and Uganda.

Tsetse flies, along with the sleeping sickness they transmit to humans and the ngana disease they transmit to livestock, create a significant burden on rural populations across sub-Saharan Africa, not only in terms of direct health effects but also by restricting the use of draft animals in crop production. The IAEA supports the efforts of African member States to implement their tsetse eradication campaign across the continent through the expanded application of the radiation-induced sterile insect technique. Mali has begun preparation for releasing sterilized tsetse flies over an area of 2,500 square kilometres, and Ethiopia is constructing a factory for sterile tsetse production that will supply a similar project over a 5,000 square kilometre area.

The use of isotope hydrology to manage water resources is continuing to gain recognition through IAEA technical cooperation projects in 40 countries around the world. Isotope hydrology is being used in Latin America and elsewhere to map underground aquifers for improved groundwater management and

has been used in Asia for investigation of, and recovery from, contamination events. In addition, we are exploring uses of isotope hydrology to assist in river basin management and, based on our successful experience in Venezuela in isolating and correcting dam leakage, we are working with multiple teams under the African Regional Cooperative Agreement to assess the leakage and structural integrity of dozens of dams across Africa.

Radiation is used regularly in an extensive array of industrial applications, ranging from the sterilization of medical products to the surface treatment of sheet metal and piping to enhance corrosion resistance. Radioisotopes are used to map and enhance the productivity of oil fields in the Middle East and elsewhere, and for troubleshooting in various operational aspects of petrochemical complexes. In the Republic of Korea, an electron beam facility is being used to enhance the treatment of waste water from a dye complex.

These are only a few of the ways in which the IAEA is using nuclear technologies to support development goals, by working closely with, and responding to, the needs and priorities of our member States.

Safety in nuclear activities around the globe is vital to the continued sustainability of nuclear technologies. While safety is primarily a national responsibility, it is equally a legitimate international concern. A nuclear or radiological accident, like other environmental accidents, respects no boundaries. It is satisfying, therefore, to note that nuclear safety continues to improve at power plants worldwide. Still, more work needs to be done, and the need for a more effective and transparent global nuclear safety regime continues to be a high priority for the IAEA.

The development and adoption of legally binding norms has proven to be a powerful mechanism for enhancing safety worldwide. The Early Notification and Assistance Conventions are long established. The Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management has been in force for over a year. And in April, the IAEA hosted in Vienna the Second Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. However, many States are not yet party to those conventions, and certain key areas of the nuclear fuel cycle are still not subject to conventions.

The continuing evolution of a comprehensive body of safety standards, together with assistance in their implementation, is another key component of the global safety regime. In the mid-1990s, the IAEA undertook a systematic, rigorous effort to overhaul its entire corpus of standards. The resulting new standards are of the highest calibre, representing current international best practices, and should be viewed as being universally applicable.

Safety standards are only effective, however, when applied in practice. The IAEA's safety services — which range in focus from operational and radiation safety to safety culture and regulatory review — use Agency standards as a baseline, assist member States in their application and provide important feedback on their effectiveness. Those safety services provide support and share valuable insights, and I continue to urge all member States to use them.

Many member States express concern over the risks involved in the transport of spent nuclear fuel and other radioactive material. Work is continuing on refining IAEA regulations for the safe transport of radioactive material. Transport Safety Appraisal Service (TranSAS) missions, which help transporting countries to assess their effectiveness in applying IAEA transport standards, were carried out in Brazil and the United Kingdom this year. A TranSAS mission will be carried out in Turkey early next year, and preliminary discussions are under way with the Panamanian authorities for a possible mission that would include appraisal operations in the Panama Canal. It is important that member States — particularly transporting countries — make use of this valuable service. Naturally, the Agency will continue its efforts, in cooperation with all concerned, to enhance all aspects of transport safety. At an international conference next year, we will provide a forum for all interested member States to discuss these transport safety issues in a comprehensive manner.

Although the responsibility to counter potential acts of nuclear terrorism rests primarily with individual States, international cooperation is essential. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 2001, the IAEA moved swiftly to conduct a thorough review of its programmes related to preventing acts of nuclear and radiological terrorism and to develop a comprehensive plan for upgrading nuclear security worldwide. The plan supplements national efforts in areas such as the physical protection of nuclear

material and nuclear facilities; the detection of malicious activities involving nuclear and other radioactive materials, such as illicit trafficking across borders; and improved control of radioactive sources.

The plan is now being implemented on all fronts. Peer reviews have been carried out to assess physical protection at nuclear power plants and other facilities. Workshops and training courses have been held to help Governments assess the threats to their nuclear facilities, raise their standards of security, improve control of nuclear and radioactive material, upgrade their border monitoring and prepare response plans for nuclear and radiological emergencies. We have also sent missions to Afghanistan, Georgia and Uganda to assist in recovering radiological sources that went astray or were not adequately protected. And in mid-June, a partnership was established between Russia, the United States and the Agency to locate and secure powerful radioactive sources that were lost or abandoned during the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. In parallel, we are also working towards global adherence to a strengthened Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Effectively upgrading security to protect against nuclear and radioactive terrorism will require a sustained, multi-year effort. We will continue to work vigorously with Governments to reduce our vulnerability to nuclear terrorism.

The universalization, consolidation and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, including concrete steps to reduce the number of, and dependence on, nuclear weapons, are more important than ever for the continued credibility of the regime. As reaffirmed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, IAEA verification continues to play a critical role in ensuring the health and vitality of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The IAEA's verification activities are designed to provide assurance that nuclear material and facilities are used exclusively for peaceful purposes. In the early 1990s, after the discovery of the clandestine nuclear weapons programme in Iraq, the international community committed itself to give the Agency the authority to strengthen its verification capability, specifically, its ability to provide assurance not only that declared nuclear material has not been diverted for non-peaceful purposes, but equally or more important, that no undeclared nuclear material or activities exist.

This broader authority is, however, still far from universal. Regrettably, 49 States have yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to bring safeguards agreements with the IAEA into force, and, since 1997 — when the Model Additional Protocol was adopted — only 28 such Protocols have entered into force. This is clearly not a satisfactory situation — far from it. Without safeguards agreements in force, the Agency cannot perform any verification activities or provide any assurance of non-proliferation. And, for States without additional protocols, the IAEA rights of access remain essentially the same as in the pre-Iraq days. The Agency can provide the required assurances only if we are given the corresponding authority.

Since December 1998, the Agency has not been in a position to implement Security Council-mandated verification activities in Iraq. The inspection activities that came to an abrupt halt at that time had successfully thwarted Iraq's efforts to develop a nuclear weapons programme by destroying, removing or rendering harmless all of Iraq's facilities, equipment and material relevant to nuclear weapons production. In the intervening four years, we have continued to use satellite monitoring and to conduct other analytical work. However, no remote analysis can enable us to reach conclusions without thorough on-site inspections.

With the adoption last Friday of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002), we are now preparing to resume our inspection activities in Iraq as early as next week, when the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and I are expected to lead an advance team of inspectors to Baghdad. In my view, the success of inspections in Iraq will depend on five interrelated prerequisites: first, immediate and unfettered access to all locations and sites in Iraq and full use of the authority provided to the inspecting organizations by the Security Council; secondly, timely access to all sources of information, including all information available to States; thirdly, unified and full support by the Security Council throughout the inspection process; fourthly, preservation of the integrity and impartiality of the inspection process, free from outside interference; and fifthly, active cooperation from Iraq, with a sustained demonstration of its stated willingness to be transparent and to assist

the inspecting organizations in fully carrying out their missions. I appeal to the Government of Iraq to provide its full cooperation, and appeal to the international community to give the inspections all the required support. I hope and trust that, with such cooperation and support, we should be able to effectively discharge our mandate.

Since 1993, the IAEA has been unable to fully implement its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Owing to a lack of access to information and to sites, we continue to be unable to verify that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made a complete and correct declaration of its nuclear material that is subject to Agency safeguards under its NPT safeguards agreement. Recent reports have suggested that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has, in addition, been working on an undeclared programme to produce highly enriched uranium. We have promptly asked the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to confirm those reports, and we have expressed the need to discuss, at a senior level, that and all other issues relevant to compliance of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its obligations under the NPT safeguards agreement. We have yet to receive a response.

Pursuant to the mandate given to me by the IAEA General Conference, I have continued to consult with the States of the Middle East region on the application of full-scope safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East and on the development of model safeguards agreements that would contribute to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. I regret to report that I have not been in a position to make any progress in the implementation of that important mandate of direct relevance to security in the Middle East. As before, I shall continue to exert every effort within my authority and, I trust, with the cooperation of all concerned, to move those discussions forward.

Earlier this year, the Presidents of the Russian Federation and of the United States signed a treaty in Moscow to further reduce their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,700 and 2,200, respectively, by the end of 2012 and agreed to remove additional amounts of fissile material from military use. Also, at their June Summit, the Group of Eight heads of State established a Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and made a commitment to raise up to $20 billion over the next 10 years to fund, inter alia, the disposal of excess weapons-origin fissile materials. Those are important steps that, it is hoped, will be followed by others, generating momentum in moving forward the stalled nuclear arms control agenda.

I should mention that preparatory work has been largely concluded at the initiative of Russia and the United States to submit nuclear material released from their military programmes to IAEA verification in order to provide assurance that they are irreversibly removed from those programmes. It is now up to Russia and the United States to indicate timing, modalities and the types of material that they are ready to submit to IAEA verification.

This brief overview of some of the IAEA's activities makes it clear that the scope of our work continues to expand. Yet, for 15 years, despite steadily growing responsibilities, the regular budget of the Agency has been essentially frozen. That policy has resulted in inadequate levels of financing for most of our areas of work. A primary example is in the safeguards area. With the chronic and corrosive degree of underfunding of that programme and a continually expanding mission, we are coming close to being unable to provide credible safeguards. For the IAEA to fulfil its obligations and high priorities — while continuing to maintain an appropriate balance between development and other statutory activities, as directed by Member States — an increase in the level of resources for the next biennium is inescapable.

This overview of IAEA activities over the past year reflects a continuing evolution in all our areas of work and, I believe, the dynamic nature of our programme in anticipating and responding to that evolution. The Agency continues to play a key role in ensuring that the benefits of nuclear technology are shared globally, that nuclear activities are conducted safely, that nuclear and radioactive materials and facilities are adequately protected and that a credible inspection regime exists to verify compliance with non-proliferation commitments. Naturally, our ability to effectively perform those functions depends on the commitment and support of Member States, which I trust will continue to be forthcoming.

Let me conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Government of Austria, which for

more than four decades has continued to be a most gracious and welcoming host to the IAEA.

The President: I thank the Director General for his introduction of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.14.

Ms. Al Mulla (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of Kuwait and in my capacity as Chair of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.14 on the report of the IAEA. The draft resolution is sponsored by Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Japan, Kuwait, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Slovakia and Spain. Since the issuance of document A/57/L.14, the following delegations have become sponsors: Australia, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovenia, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.

This draft resolution underlines the vital role being played by the IAEA in the collective effort to promote sustainable development and global peace. I would like to thank the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for the statement he just made, in which he highlighted the major achievements and activities of the IAEA over the past year.

By this draft resolution, the General Assembly recognizes the importance of the work of the Agency in promoting the further application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in implementing and strengthening safeguards system, ensuring and promoting safety standards, including the safe transport of radioactive materials, preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, improving nuclear security and protecting Member States from nuclear terrorism.

The draft resolution being introduced today is the outcome of an extensive and exhaustive process of open-ended negotiations and consultations. We started this process following the conclusion of the IAEA General Conference session, on 20 September 2002. The consultation process was guided by the following considerations.

First, the aim was to produce a draft resolution of a substantive nature. As the work of the IAEA increasingly gains international attention and recognition, members of the IAEA were of the general view that a substantive text was warranted. Secondly, we needed to keep the content of the draft resolution close to the language and substance of resolutions adopted last September by the General Conference of the IAEA so as to avoid reopening already agreed text for further debate here in New York. Thirdly, we attempted to gain broad support among delegations for the draft resolution.

I am pleased to report that, with the help of IAEA member States and with the constructive spirit shown throughout the consultation process by all parties, we reached agreement on the draft resolution. Agreement was possible thanks to the understanding of delegations and their common concern to address the totality of the IAEA's work. This was done after difficult compromises had been reached on several crucial issues and after a great investment of effort and time. At the conclusion of the negotiation process in Vienna there was a general understanding among delegations that the current text would not be unraveled or renegotiated here in New York. I renewed my appeal to Member States to support that understanding during consultations last week here in New York.

As members know, the IAEA works by consensus. That tradition has become known as the spirit of Vienna. It is encouraging to see that, notwithstanding their differences and divergent positions on important issues, Member States continue to make every effort to preserve that tradition. This undoubtedly contributes to the efficient and professional performance the Agency is known for. It is my sincere hope and the hope of Member States that this constructive approach will be maintained here in New York. Therefore, we hope that the draft resolution will be adopted in the same spirit, preferably today.

The President: Now I give the floor to the representative of Iraq to introduce an amendment contained in document A/57/L.17.

Mr. Salman (Iraq): My delegation is honoured to present its amendment (A/57/L.17) to the draft resolution entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (A/57/L.14), introduced to the Assembly today. The text of the amendment contains a factual statement quoted from a letter of the Secretary-

General, Mr. Kofi Annan, dated 16 September 2002, addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/2002/1034, which informed the Council of Iraq's decision to allow the return of the United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq without conditions.

Last year, the paragraphs related to Iraq in the draft resolution presented to the General Assembly on same item called upon Iraq to accept the return of the inspectors. This year, we note that, instead of welcoming Iraq's decision to allow the unconditional return of the inspectors, new language has been introduced to the twelfth preambular paragraph that contradicts the language contained in previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and that reflects political aims rather than technical realities.

My delegation sought to participate last week in any discussions on the draft resolution in order to try to contribute its amendments and explain its position to interested delegations. But it faced the decision of the sponsors that the text would not be open to discussion. In the light of that fact, my delegation has decided to present this factual quotation as an amendment, fully benefiting from the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations giving Member States the right to express their views about matters before the General Assembly. My delegation strongly believes that the words of the Secretary-General will enrich the text and will contribute to providing it with the needed balance.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): It is a great pleasure for me to extend our gratitude to Mr. ElBaradei for presenting the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the year 2001. The report is reflective of the dynamic leadership he has provided to the Agency's staff and of their endeavours in promoting the peaceful application of atomic energy.

Being a founding member of the IAEA, Pakistan has always upheld the goals and objectives of the Agency. The IAEA's role in the process of economic development through the enhanced contribution of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is universally acknowledged.

As rightly projected in the IAEA report, the global electricity demand is likely to triple in the next 50 years. Such a demand cannot be fulfilled by fossil fuel alone, which would impose an unacceptable burden on natural resources and on the environment. Keeping in view the present growth of the world's population, which is likely to double in another 50 years, reliance on fossil fuel will not be possible.

Therefore, the only other proven and sustainable option is the use of nuclear energy. We feel that opposition to nuclear power, despite its good safety record and environmentally friendly character, is either based on misunderstanding or is a deliberate tactic to deny this technology to the developing countries.

Technology, safety and verification remain the three pillars of the IAEA's mandate. The IAEA has been assigned important responsibilities for verification and monitoring, and we believe that these responsibilities should be fully discharged. However, the IAEA must not lose the balance which is required between the various facets of its mandate and functions.

Unfortunately, one finds disparities in the application of the IAEA principles and standards, especially with regard to the developing countries. Despite their adherence to safety norms, they are denied access to the latest technologies relating to nuclear energy. Undue restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology for energy, health and agricultural purposes are bound to affect the economic and social development of the developing countries.

We have also carefully studied the report of the Director General on nuclear security, "Progress on Measures to Protect against Nuclear Terrorism". We have taken careful note of the recommendations concerning nuclear materials falling into the hands of terrorists. We hope and trust that this will never happen. Precautionary measures should be taken by the States which possess nuclear materials, facilities and technology. But the instruments of terror can be unexpected, as we discovered on 11 September. The IAEA should address real concerns regarding so-called nuclear terrorism. It should not be used to serve partisan political objectives. The global focus should not be allowed to be shifted from the priority goal of complete nuclear disarmament by all States.

The crucial relationship between peace, economic growth and technology cannot be overemphasized. Economic growth is synonymous with the availability of easy and affordable sources of energy. Pakistan's limited hydro fossil fuel resources are insufficient to cater to an ever-increasing demand for energy. Therefore, nuclear generation is an indispensable element of our national energy strategy. We are

encouraged by the recent positive shift in attitudes towards nuclear energy at the international level. The Agency's report for the year 2001 predicts even better prospects for nuclear power.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Pakistan wants to build safeguarded nuclear power plants and seeks the cooperation and assistance of the member States of the IAEA for this purpose. We have embarked upon the second phase of the projects for the Karachi nuclear power plant and the Chashma nuclear power plant. We believe that the construction and operation of a nuclear power plant not only has direct economic advantages for the developing countries but also creates thousands of jobs for poorer people.

Apart from nuclear energy, Pakistan has applied nuclear science in the development of agriculture and in the fields of health and the reclamation of wasteland, as well as in combating the problem of salinity. We also appreciate the growing cooperation between the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and the IAEA in all these fields.

We are fully aware of the importance of safety in nuclear establishments. We are active adherents to the International Convention on Nuclear Safety. The recent Review Conference, held in Vienna, expressed its appreciation for the safety record of Pakistan. We accord the highest priority to the strengthening of the culture of safety in all our nuclear establishments. Subsequent to the setting up of an independent Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority, which reports directly to the head of Government, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission has further strengthened its own Directorate of Safety, which addresses the issues of nuclear safety, radiation and protection, and operates the Nuclear Emergency Response Coordination Centre. We look forward to greater cooperation with the advanced countries in terms of the unhindered availability of technology, in keeping with the spirit of the Nuclear Safety Convention.

As in the past several decades, the safeguards record of Pakistan has remained impeccable during the past year as well. We are convinced that agreed safeguard measures provide strong complementary means to achieve greater safety and security of nuclear material. This conviction has led us to work for the strengthening of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, in cooperation with the international community.

While the safety of nuclear establishments and safeguards measures are crucial in dealing with nuclear technology, there is a need to reassess the current framework, which is based on discrimination, and to build upon new strategies which may benefit all member States equitably. We therefore suggest, first, acceptance by the developed countries of the importance of technical cooperation activities vis-à-vis regulatory activities of the Agency, and a fair balance between the two; secondly, the provision of more assured funds for technical cooperation activities, technology transfer and training facilities for the developing countries; thirdly, a higher percentage of expert assignments from developing countries, at least at the regional level; fourthly, higher openings of Technical Cooperation for Developing Countries in project design and implementation; fifthly, the payment by member States of their contributions to the Agency's Technical Cooperation Fund in full and a timely manner; and sixthly, increased utilization of regional resource centres from the developing member States, with increased outsourcing to them.

We all have great expectations from the IAEA in the promotion of technical cooperation. This objective can be achieved through strict adherence to the Statute of the Agency. More importantly, we expect the IAEA to pursue a balanced and non-discriminatory approach in providing access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, particularly to the developing countries.

Mr. Balarezo (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Peru wishes to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his introduction of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 2001. The report reflects the progress made in terms of the organization's three fundamental pillars: the system of verification and security for all activities throughout the nuclear cycle; technical cooperation; and transfer of technology for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Peru would like once again to emphasize how important we consider the work of the IAEA to be with regard to transfers of technology and know-how for the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy. We therefore appreciate the IAEA's ongoing support, which has made it possible for us to develop invaluable nuclear energy applications in the fields of medicine, mining, industry, the management of water and soils, disease

control and nutrition. Furthermore, we are grateful for the training opportunities provided to personnel who are responsible for such applications, which is a central element of the system of technology transfers promoted by the IAEA.

One year ago, we were discussing the impact of the terrorist attacks that shook this city and the world. The international community was beginning to close ranks in order to confront that threat. The mind boggles at the prospect of criminal elements gaining access to fissionable or radioactive materials or attacking any kind of nuclear facility or transport mechanism of such material.

The delegation of Peru therefore welcomes the opportunity to participate actively with the Agency with a view to enhancing its capacity to prevent, or provide protection or security against, nuclear terrorism, which has also been expressed by, inter alia, the recent adoption at the forty-sixth session of the IAEA General Conference of the resolution on measures to improve nuclear security and to protect against threats in this regard.

Peru also highlights the crucial importance of international instruments agreed upon under IAEA auspices, including the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the parties to which recently held their second review meeting to consider national reports, with a view to increasing security for nuclear activities. This is an abiding and vital goal of great significance, not just for the present but for the future — a goal that the delegation of Peru firmly supports.

The IAEA is carrying out fundamental work in the area of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The importance of an efficient and strengthened system of verification and inspection that makes it possible to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities has been clearly underlined during Security Council debate. Council members have agreed on the need for enhanced and transparent verification mechanisms with regard to nuclear materials so as to provide reliable non-diversion guarantees that ensure that no State has undeclared nuclear materials or engages in nuclear-related activities.

Peru has always acknowledged such a need. Peru was the first country in Latin America to put in force an Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA — an instrument carefully designed to increase the Organization's data collection and evaluation capacities in determining whether or not undeclared nuclear material is present.

In the same vein, Peru hosted in December last year a regional IAEA seminar on the Additional Protocol for the benefit of the countries members of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. That initiative stimulated a region-wide dialogue that helped to prompt seven Latin American States to sign or ratify that important instrument.

Radiological protection, including the safe transportation of radioactive material, is also a source of concern and an issue of particular importance for Peru. As a coastal country that is keenly conscious of the need to protect its marine environment, Peru fully shares the concerns of other States with regard to possible ecological damage, repercussions on human health and the economic losses that an accident or incident during the transportation of radioactive material or waste might trigger.

The adoption of a major new resolution on this issue at the forty-sixth General Conference of the IAEA was confirmation of the need to pay particular attention to this issue in a holistic way. This must include machinery to ensure that those responsible for damage are held to account, as well as to provide for the timely and complete exchange of information among the transporting and coastal States prior to the departure of any vessel; the enhancement of physical safety; and the setting up of an emergency response system to deal with any possible accident or incident during such transportation.

The annual report of the IAEA for 2001 states that those who transport radioactive materials have built up an impressive track record of safety and security. It is precisely for that reason that Peru believes that the process of establishing an integral and effective international system for transporting those materials should not present any serious obstacles. We hope and expect that the international conference to be held in Vienna from 7 to 11 July 2003 will make it possible for us to make progress in that respect.

Mr. Mustafa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like first of all to thank Mr. ElBaradei, the Executive Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his briefing and his comprehensive report on the activities of the IAEA. I would also like to pay tribute to him for his efforts to improve the performance and effectiveness, as well as to broaden

the scope, of activities and programmes in this area relating to developing countries.

Sudan was a member of the IAEA Board of Governors from 1998 to 2000 and participated effectively in amending article VI of the Statute of the IAEA to expand the membership of the Board, which was adopted during the 1999 session of the General Conference. The amendment was approved by the Republic of the Sudan in 2001, and we deposited the amendment with the United States so that it could enter into force.

My country also expresses its support for the progress made in responding to the challenge of international nuclear terrorism with a view to protecting humankind from that scourge. We firmly and unequivocally condemn all forms and manifestations of terrorism. We must take measures to prevent nuclear terrorism, the threat of which is very grave. My country is concerned, however, that the fight against international terrorism is taking resources away from technical assistance programmes, which could have a very negative impact on such programmes and projects.

The fight against nuclear proliferation, as well as the signature and ratification of additional protocols, are among the most important issues for the Agency. Hence my country signed and ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1973. The treaty entered into force in July 1997 — a long time ago. But the situation in the Middle East requires in-depth analysis and a comprehensive view, since the only nuclear entity in this region, Israel, refuses to sign the NPT or an Additional Protocol, and it offers some unacceptable justifications and pretexts for not doing so. This is distorted logic that is making it impossible to bring about true peace in the Middle East. And this, in turn, means that the region is now caught in a vicious circle.

We support the Iraqi Government's reply to the appeals of the Secretary-General, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference for the unconditional return of the inspectors so that they can finish their job.

The Sudanese delegation pays a special tribute to the Agency's technical cooperation programme for its technical support and useful information for developing countries. We also welcome the fact that draft resolution A/57/L.14 stresses the need to provide sufficient resources for those activities. We hope that additional financial resources will be forthcoming and will become an integral part of the IAEA's budget, beyond contributions and assistance from donor countries, so that we can meet the challenges faced by developing countries, and given the importance of the programme, which exists for the developing countries. Donor countries, of course, could still give more to developing countries in order to complement IAEA programmes.

My country had the privilege of receiving the Director General of the IAEA last December. We are gratified by the success of his visit, which took place within the framework of technical cooperation. During the first half of this year we hosted two regional meetings to evaluate African projects. The executive bodies in Sudan are prepared to host further regional meetings on Africa, which could take place in Khartoum, our capital.

Technical cooperation programmes are the ideal way for developing countries to build their national capacities in the areas of medicine, health, water, the environment and nuclear radiation safety. At present, great efforts are under way to meet the challenge of eliminating the tsetse fly and malaria-bearing mosquitoes throughout Africa. I hail the joint efforts of Sudan and Ethiopia, our neighbour, to put a programme in place to fight this problem in the 80-kilometre-long Khor Yabous area and to eradicate this scourge along that part of the border between our two countries. I would like to thank the IAEA's technical assistance programme, which is seeking to eradicate the tsetse fly through sterile insect technique. We welcome their successful efforts. We have made some progress also in getting rid of the malaria-bearing mosquito, which is a major problem for the economic and social development of developing countries in general and for that of African countries in particular.

Mr. Atta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. ElBaradei, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to say how much we appreciated his statement, which introduced the Agency's 2001 annual report. He summarized the main achievements of 2001 and outlined the challenges we will face in the future.

Egypt is aware of the important role played by the IAEA in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security through its nuclear-non-proliferation activities. Egypt also appreciates the

outstanding contribution of the Agency to implementing the priorities for international action through its activities and achievements in the areas of sustainable development, the transfer of nuclear technology and know-how, technical assistance, verification and nuclear security.

Technical cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy is one of the major activities of the IAEA. It contributes to the prosperity of the world's peoples, those of developing countries in particular.

Egypt appreciates the Agency's efforts to develop and update a cooperative strategy for technology, with the development of member countries as a priority. The IAEA makes a crucial contribution to those activities. In this way, technology can make a clear, short- and medium-term contribution; this is one of the pillars of the Agency's activities.

In terms of safeguards activities, we have noted the efforts of the secretariat to enhance the safeguards regime. At the same time, we are aware that the effectiveness of safeguards can be achieved only if all aspects are universal: comprehensive safeguards and Additional Protocols must be part of that. We take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that without universal IAEA safeguards it will be impossible for the efforts to eliminate the danger of nuclear proliferation to yield fruit. Therefore, it is necessary to act to bring about universal implementation of these safeguards, because they are the pillar of non-proliferation.

Egypt has proposed on several occasions, both internationally and regionally, that we do something to confront the danger of nuclear proliferation. In 1974, we called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That appeal has been reiterated, by consensus, by the General Assembly since 1980. In April 1990, President Hosni Mubarak called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Through the IAEA, Egypt has always advocated, and still advocates, the implementation of comprehensive IAEA safeguards for all nuclear facilities in the Middle East, without discrimination.

In spite of all those efforts and initiatives to attain peace and stability for all States in the region, Israel has never seriously shown the will to accept the safeguards regime for its nuclear facilities. This has had negative consequences for the implementation of comprehensive safeguards for nuclear facilities in the Middle East. It means that the international community now has a double responsibility: to put an end to all the dangers of proliferation for the sake of peace and security, and to ensure the implementation of comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

On several occasions, Egypt has said that Iraq must comply with provisions of Security Council resolutions. We view favourably the statement made by Iraq last September in which it stated that full cooperation and inspections would resume unconditionally. Now that the Security Council has adopted resolution 1441 (2002), of 8 November 2002, we must call on Iraq to implement the resolution fully. As the Secretary-General has said, Iraq's cooperation will be the first step in confirming that Iraq does not possess weapons of mass destruction. That will lead to the suspension of the sanctions that have caused great harm to the Iraqi people.

Egypt regrets the absence in the recently adopted resolution of any mention of establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The credibility of the international community vis-à-vis Iraq requires international efforts to ensure that the Middle East is a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. That should be done in accordance with resolution 687 (1991), and in order to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and the threat they pose throughout the world, especially in South and East Asia.

With regard to nuclear safety, the events of 11 September 2001 have served to underscore the need to strengthen the activities of the IAEA with regard to securing fissile materials, nuclear facilities and other radioactive materials and to protecting them from the danger posed by international terrorism. Egypt understands that the danger and the threat of terrorism will continue to exist so long as nuclear materials remain outside international supervision.

As we have just said, we reaffirm that the position of our Governments with respect to the production of fissile material is based on the need to subject nuclear materials, including stockpiled materials, to international supervision. Egypt has taken part in every effort to draft additional measures within the IAEA to protect us from nuclear terrorism. We believe that such measures must be in line with fundamental standards and that they must not be an alternative to national measures. We should not

diminish the responsibilities of the international community with regard to security, which should be financed through voluntary contributions. In the same vein, Egypt hopes that the additional measures and activities proposed in this regard will complement cooperation in the area of technical assistance, so that the Group of Experts established by the IAEA will be able to complete its work and present its recommendations to strengthen the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the intensive and effective efforts that have been made in Vienna to produce the draft resolution under consideration and reaffirms its support for the activities of the IAEA aimed at strengthening its ability to face future challenges.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway align themselves with this statement.

It is with great interest that the European Union acknowledges the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the year 2001. We welcome the statement of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in which he provided additional information on the main developments in the activities of the Agency in 2002. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the secretariat of the IAEA and Director General Mohamed ElBaradei on the excellent work the Agency does.

The draft resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency presented to us in document A/57/L.14 represents broad agreement among Member States in Vienna. We hope it can be adopted by consensus.

We welcome the outcome of the forty-sixth regular session of the IAEA General Conference, held in Vienna from 16 to 20 September this year. The Agency has an essential role to play in combating nuclear terror. We commend the Director General and the IAEA secretariat for responding quickly to this challenge, first of all by reinforcing and reorienting some ongoing activities and, shortly thereafter, by presenting plans for activities aimed at helping Member States to secure a stringent nuclear security framework for nuclear installations and materials. The primary responsibility for ensuring the necessary nuclear security clearly rests with Member States. The activities of the Agency can only be in support of national measures to counter nuclear terrorism. Technical cooperation programmes are already playing an important role in upgrading safety and security. They will also be valuable instruments in this context.

An international nuclear-non-proliferation regime of a universal character, backed by a strong international safeguards system requiring States to properly account for and control nuclear materials, is an absolutely essential basis for international efforts to maintain our collective security. It is the responsibility of Member States to promote the universality of the non-proliferation regime and to adhere to the applicable international instruments.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, the essential international instrument of the IAEA safeguards system. At the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference, held in April of this year, the responsibility of the IAEA in further strengthening both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional-protocol components of the regime was strongly underlined. Noting the concerns expressed by the Director General in that regard, the European Union recognizes the need for a properly funded safeguards system that is both effective and cost-efficient. The Union is prepared to consider growth in the safeguards budget whenever such requirements can be demonstrated.

All the States Members of the European Union have made a clear commitment to the ratification process for their respective additional protocols, a process most of them have finalized. We have committed ourselves to have the protocols of European Union member States enter into force simultaneously. We consider that additional protocols are an integral part of the IAEA safeguards system, and that adherence to them is an essential means of demonstrating fulfilment of the obligations of article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The European Union therefore

urges all States that have not yet signed and ratified an additional protocol to do so.

We share the concern of the Director General that 48 States that are parties to the NPT have not yet entered into safeguards agreements. We call upon those States to fulfil the obligation they entered into under article III of the Treaty, and to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements.

The European Union wishes to recall its concern regarding the continued existence of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and materials in States not parties to the NPT or equivalent treaties. The EU calls upon those States to place all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards.

The situation in Iraq remains a major concern for the EU. Three and a half years have now passed since the IAEA was last able to implement its mandate in Iraq. The Agency is therefore unable to provide any assurances regarding Iraqi compliance with its obligations. The EU underlines that, on return to Iraq, the Agency must, in particular, resolve the key issue of whether Iraq's nuclear activities and capabilities have changed since December 1998.

The EU reiterates its demand that Iraq adhere fully to all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, especially that it let the United Nations inspectors return to Iraq without precondition and that it fully cooperate with the inspection teams in all aspects, including granting immediate and unhindered access to all sites and facilities the inspectors might want to investigate.

We are deeply concerned over reports that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has admitted conducting a clandestine nuclear weapon programme. The European Union urges North Korea to immediately offer clarification on the issues. Such a programme is a serious breach of the North Korean commitments under the NPT, the IAEA safeguard agreement, as well as the Joint Declaration between North and South Korea on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the Agreed Framework. It also calls into question the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) project.

The EU calls on North Korea to take immediate steps to comply with international non-proliferation commitments and to eliminate its nuclear weapons programme in a verifiable manner, in accordance with its IAEA Safeguards Agreement. The EU stands ready to work with all parties to find a peaceful resolution to this situation, which constitutes a serious development for peace and stability internationally and regionally.

The EU attaches great importance to a high level of nuclear safety worldwide and undertakes to maintain a high level of nuclear safety in the Union. The EU member States and the associated countries closely cooperate in that field.

The EU attaches great importance to technical cooperation as one of the pillars of the Agency's activities. Our support is well demonstrated by the very high level of voluntary contributions provided by EU member States, which in 2002 will amount to approximately 35 per cent of the total contributions. The EU continues to wish to see adequate financing for those important activities, and will contribute constructively next year when the Board of Governors reviews the funding mechanism for technical cooperation.

The EU is well aware of the increasingly difficult context in which the Agency has to finance its statutory obligations under the regular budget. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Agency has the financial resources to do so. The EU is concerned that an important number of member States of the IAEA do not live up to their financial obligations to the Agency. The EU strongly urges all member States to pay in full and on time their assessed contribution to the regular budget, as well as outstanding contributions from previous years that now amount to approximately $18 million.

The EU proposes to introduce to the Agency a single currency system based on the euro, taking effect from the 2004-2005 biennium. The fact that the overwhelming majority of its expenditure occurs in euros underlines the advantages of a euro-based financial system. In our opinion, that system will substantially contribute to improve transparency, effectiveness and efficiency in the Agency's management of its financial resources of both the regular budget as well as extrabudgetary funds. We appreciate the work done so far by the IAEA secretariat to examine the issue and to provide member States with information on the provisional findings. We look forward to a comprehensive report later this year in order to reach an agreement on this proposal during the first half of 2003.

The EU fully supports the Director General in his continued efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Agency. A results-based approach to budgeting requires strong management and a clear definition of crosscutting activities. Enhanced cooperation and coordination between departments should be encouraged, leading to more synergy and better use of resources, human as well as financial. In that context, we welcome the Director General's decision to engage an outside management consultant to review the achievements so far and to suggest further measures to be to taken.

Finally, let me assure Members that the EU and the States that have associated themselves with this statement fully support the role that the IAEA plays as the competent authority for verification of compliance with the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, as well as its role in promoting the safe usage of nuclear technologies for peaceful application in those member States that have chosen to use that technology.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his presentation of the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (A/57/L.14). We also wish to welcome the entry of Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan and Seychelles to the IAEA membership.

Following up on the announcement made by the Minister for Foreign Relations of Cuba on 14 September 2002 to the General Assembly, the Government of the Republic of Cuba proceeded to deposit the instruments of adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on 4 November 2002, in Moscow.

With the Cuban adherence, 188 States are now parties to that international instrument.

At the time of adherence, Cuba reiterated its position of principle to the effect that military doctrines based on the possession of nuclear weapons are unacceptable. It also reaffirmed its criteria that no country or group of countries should be allowed a monopoly over nuclear weapons or over their quantitative or qualitative development.

Cuba is convinced that the only way to overcome the original flaws of the NPT and its selective and discriminatory essence is by achieving the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In complying with the provisions of the NPT, the legitimate right of States to have full access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must also be respected. Therefore, the imposition of restrictive unilateral measures on the exchange of equipment, supplies and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must also cease.

Cuba's decision to become a State party to the NPT reaches beyond its national interests and is a clear indication of the political will and the commitment of the Cuban Government to promoting and strengthening the United Nations, multilateralism and international treaties on disarmament and arms control.

As a State party to the NPT, Cuba intends to become actively involved in the preparatory process for the next NPT Review Conference and to work together with other States that, like Cuba, aspire to achieving total elimination under strict international monitoring of all nuclear weapons.

On 23 October in Mexico City, the Government of Cuba also deposited its instruments of ratification of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, along with all its amendments. With Cuba's ratification, the Treaty of Tlatelolco enters fully into force throughout its area of application and Latin America and the Caribbean will thus be formally declared the first inhabited area of the planet free of nuclear weapons.

Cuba signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 25 March 1995, essentially as an act of solidarity with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, despite the fact that the United States, the sole nuclear Power in the Americas, was pursuing a policy of hostility against us and tightening its economic, trade and financial blockade, while maintaining by force and against the will of the Cuban people the illegal occupation of a part of our national territory.

As we ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco, these obstacles remain in place and are even increasing. However, in contrast to the interest of the global super-Power in ensuring the prevalence of unilateralism in the resolution of international problems, Cuba is once again demonstrating its commitment to promoting and strengthening multilateralism and international disarmament and arms control treaties. The step Cuba has taken also contributes to regional efforts to

promote nuclear disarmament and international peace and security.

Cuba attaches great importance to the IAEA's work and reiterates the need to attain an appropriate balance among the three fundamental pillars of that organization's work: technical cooperation, security and verification. We welcome the fact that, following a prolonged deadlock, the target figure for the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund will be increased for the biennium 2003-2004. We hope that this figure will continue to rise in the future in correspondence with the real and growing needs of the recipient countries. It is essential that the IAEA maintain a Technical Cooperation Fund marked by constant, predictable and secure growth.

Cuba maintains a major technical cooperation programme with the IAEA and has always made the optimum use of allocated resources. Such resources have been directed into our country's priority programmes in such spheres as human health, agriculture and industry and the implementation of these projects has had a significant impact.

Cuba reaffirms its support for the Regional Cooperative Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL), which it recently ratified. We view the ARCAL programme as the ideal framework for cooperation among the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region. In the context of our firm will to promote the important work of ARCAL, Cuba will organize the fourth meeting of its Technical Coordination Board, to be held in Havana in May next year.

Cuba believes that the IAEA can and must play a very important role in fighting nuclear terrorism. That is why we support the efforts of the IAEA to undertake programmes and activities to protect against nuclear terrorism, without prejudice to the human and financial resources earmarked for sustainable socio-economic development.

We support the proposal to establish voluntary funds for extrabudgetary contributions to finance new activities, such as the campaign against nuclear terrorism. At the same time, it is important to preserve the voluntary funds that are currently devoted to IAEA technical cooperation, which many developing countries so urgently need.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation welcomes Director General ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and expresses its gratitude for the annual report of the Agency.

We are pleased to welcome the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Seychelles and Eritrea as new IAEA members. We have warm neighbourly and partnership relations with the Kyrgyz Republic in the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as strong business links in implementing the programmes of uranium fields development and radioactive waste disposal. We hope that the accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the IAEA will make our bilateral cooperation in this field even more effective.

The Russian Federation is an active IAEA member engaged in the multifaceted activities of the Agency, which embrace such key areas as non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through its control functions, the peaceful use of nuclear energy for development, and the development of safe and environmentally friendly innovation technologies in this field.

Last year, terrorist attacks in the United States and the very recent tragic events in Moscow, when terrorists took more than 700 hostages, highlighted the threat of international terrorism to the entire world. This credible threat calls for concerted multilateral efforts in creating a global system to counter new challenges and threats, in particular in the nuclear field.

In this regard, we would like to commend the Agency's efforts to fight nuclear terrorism, including in the light of the decisions made by the G-8 leaders in Kananaskis, Canada. We believe that enhanced physical protection regime, the safe storage of nuclear materials, the prevention of their illegal trafficking, and the improvement of their record-keeping and control, combined with other measures to increase the efficiency of the IAEA control system, will make it possible to deny terrorists and their accomplices any access to hazardous materials.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is of crucial importance to international security. We expect that the preparatory process for the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, to be held in 2005, will help to consolidate a maximum number of States to attain the Treaty goals.

The Russian-United States Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions signed in Moscow earlier this year is an important contribution to strengthening strategic stability. Russia has already begun work on its ratification. The importance of this treaty and the declaration on a new strategic relationship between the Russian Federation and the United States goes beyond bilateral relations and meets the interests of all States. In this regard, we welcome the recent adoption by consensus of the draft resolution supporting this document in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

Excessive weapon-grade materials utilization and nuclear weapons reduction are an important aspect of nuclear disarmament. We continue to implement the agreement between the Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States of America concerning the disposition of highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons dated February 18, 1993. The Russian nuclear weapons industry is being converted to serve the interests of nuclear energy.

We note with satisfaction that the promotion of nuclear energy remains one of the key priorities pursued by the Agency. In 2000, the IAEA General Conference passed the resolution on "Strengthening the Agency's Activities Related to Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications" (GC(44)/RES/20). The international project on innovative reactors and fuel cycle, which is being carried out within the framework of this resolution, is becoming increasing authoritative. We view this project as one of the practical steps towards the implementation of the initiative launched by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Putin at the Millennium Summit on energy supply for sustained development of mankind, radical solution to the problems posed by proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as for a global environmental improvement.

Russia is giving greater and greater attention to new nuclear technology research and development. In accordance with the nuclear energy development strategy of Russia for the first half of the twenty-first century approved by the Government, several innovative projects based on thermal and fast neutron reactors are under way. These will particularly help address the problems of safe use of weapon-grade and energy plutonium while preparing for the transition to complete closed fuel cycle.

The Russian Federation supports the efforts made by the Agency to foster cooperation in the field of nuclear technology. We attach great importance to the implementation of a number of projects, in particular the regional project on research reactor safety and the model project on improving the radiation protection infrastructure in several member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We find that the financing of the technical assistance fund through the IAEA member States' assessed contributions in national currency according to the United Nations scale of assessments is an effective approach. We will pay our current year's contribution in the near future and continue contributing to this fund regularly.

The Russian delegation is grateful to Ambassador Nabeela Al-Mulla, the Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors, for presenting the draft resolution on the IAEA Report to the General Assembly. The Russian Federation is one of the co-authors of the draft, which succeeds in reflecting the balance of interests of most States. We call for support for this draft.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his statement as well as for preparing the report of the Agency now before us. In addition, I am pleased to extend a hearty welcome to Eritrea, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Seychelles, which have recently become members of the IAEA.

Promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy contributes to the world's stable supply of energy and the protection of the global environment. Japan greatly appreciates the IAEA's role in fostering and strengthening international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as on nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation. As the only country to have suffered the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and that has long been committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, Japan is determined to use its wealth of experience for the greater benefit of humankind. It attaches the highest priority to safety in utilizing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and is striving to promote safety both domestically and internationally.

Allow me to briefly highlight some aspects of the activities of the IAEA that we deem to be particularly important. I would like first of all to emphasize the

importance of the universalization of the Additional Protocol in responding to the various challenges to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime. It strengthens the Agency's capability to detect undeclared nuclear materials and activities by enlarging the scope of the information to be provided and by implementing complementary access.

In order to help maintain the momentum for the universalization of the Additional Protocol, Japan, in cooperation with the IAEA, will host the International Conference for Wider Adherence to Strengthened IAEA Safeguards next month in Tokyo. This Conference will be held from the global perspective, in order to consolidate the results of the five regional seminars and symposia that have been held so far. It will also provide participants with the opportunity to reconfirm the importance of the IAEA safeguards that guarantee international peace and security, and consider concrete steps toward the strengthening of the Additional Protocol.

Japan, in this context, urges the IAEA secretariat to make further efforts toward the early adoption of integrated safeguards in order not only to realize the rationalization of the safeguards but also to provide an incentive to conclude the Additional Protocol.

The nuclear weapon development program of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a serious security issue for Japan. It is also a major concern for the international non-proliferation regime. In the Japan — Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration issued at the time of Prime Minister Koizumi's meeting with Chairman Kim Jong Il last September,

> "Both sides confirmed to comply with all related international agreements for an overall resolution of the nuclear issues on the Korean Peninsula." (Pyongyang Declaration, September 17, 2002).

In the official high-level bilateral normalization talks held in Kuala Lumpur last month, Japan once again expressed its concerns in detail, and called upon North Korea to comply with all related international agreements.

In the trilateral leaders' meeting of Japan, United States and Republic of Korea, and in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders' meeting — both of which were held on the 26th of last month, the leaders noted the potential for North Korea to benefit from greater participation as a member of the international community. However, North Korea's relations with the international community now rest on its prompt and visible actions to dismantle its programmes to develop nuclear weapons.

In that connection, it is important that North Korea implement the IAEA safeguards agreement fully and allow the Agency to take the necessary actions to draw conclusions on the situation regarding nuclear development programmes in North Korea. Japan intends to continuously work upon North Korea on this point. Japan also expresses its great appreciation for the IAEA's announcement that it is ready to dispatch a senior team to North Korea or to receive a North Korean team in order to discuss the implementation of the safeguards agreement. Japan calls upon North Korea to accept the proposal of the IAEA.

In closing, allow me to reiterate my Government's strong commitment to, and support for, the activities of the IAEA.

Mr. Kára (Czech Republic): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. ElBaradei, IAEA Director General, for his informative and comprehensive opening statement highlighting the achievements of the activities of the IAEA in the course of the most recent period.

As the Czech Republic associates itself with the statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the European Union, I will touch upon only some of the topics that are of particular importance to my country.

The efforts and activities of the IAEA are scrutinized in the light of the present debate on global security problems and the role of nuclear energy in sustainable development. The key role of the Agency lies, in our view, in helping humankind to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks related to the exploitation of nuclear power. The international community expects the Agency to continue playing its important role under the three pillars of its mandate: verification, safety and technology. In the most recent period, the IAEA succeeded in achieving its main objectives: serving as a unique platform for the transfer of nuclear science and technology; building and maintaining a global nuclear safety regime; guarding against proliferation of nuclear weapons; and strengthening the security and physical protection of nuclear material and facilities.

My country has continued to work hard with other countries to enhance the global non-proliferation regime and its verification. The recent completion of ratification by the Czech Parliament of the Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement, signed between the IAEA and the Czech Republic, is the most visible contribution to those efforts in the most recent period. The full implementation of the Protocol has been among the highest priorities of the State administration. As has the European Union, we would like to use this opportunity to urge those who have not yet done so to conclude similar protocols with the Agency without delay in order to make the strengthened safeguards system as broad as possible and, ultimately, universal.

From the very beginning of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the major supplying countries have recognized the responsibility to ensure that such cooperation activities do not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. That principle is reflected in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in the multilateral regimes on export controls.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group, together with the Zangger Committee, play an important role in support of the NPT and non-proliferation in general. The Czech Republic, which currently chairs the Nuclear Suppliers Group, attaches high priority to the Group's dialogue with other non-member States, in particular potential nuclear suppliers. In the exercise of that office, we are as transparent and cooperative as possible in pursuing the non-proliferation objectives.

Non-proliferation efforts also have their anti-terrorism dimension. The Czech Republic will not stand aside; it wants to join new initiatives in the area of protection against nuclear terrorism, including the Agency's plan of action. Both in-kind and financial contributions are being considered.

The President returned to the Chair.

The Czech Republic belongs to the group of countries that broadly employ nuclear technology to satisfy various needs of their society. In our view, most of the nuclear technology non-power applications in human health, food and agriculture and chemical and physical sciences are able to bring distinct economic and social benefits to every part of the world. Of course, any such use shall be carefully tailored to the specific needs and existing infrastructure of individual countries and regions. In that context, the Czech Republic recognizes the importance of technical cooperation among member States. With the aim of contributing to those endeavours, Czech organizations and individual experts take active part in various cooperative programmes and other IAEA-sponsored activities in order to encourage sound progress in the development and peaceful use of nuclear energy in Europe and other regions. As in previous years, the Czech Government allocated additional financial resources to support activities under the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme and made voluntary contributions to specific projects in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. The Czech Republic also welcomes all efforts to efficiently direct Technical Cooperation funds to the indispensable activities of the Agency's major programmes. A results-oriented approach applied in the process of planning for the programme and budget for the period 2004-2005 is an appropriate vehicle for achieving more efficient spending of funds, not only in the area of technical cooperation.

Since the Czech Republic is a country with scarce energy resources, nuclear power is an important part of our energy mix. Currently, approximately 20 per cent of the country's electricity is generated by the four units of the Dukovany nuclear power plant. The commissioning of the two units of the Temelin nuclear power plant is in progress. When at full power, the installed capacity of Czech nuclear power plants will more than double.

With respect to the Temelin nuclear power plant, I cannot fail to mention nuclear safety issues. I have to underline that the Czech Government attaches the utmost importance to the safety of nuclear installations operated on its territory. In order to demonstrate that, the system of nuclear safety assessment continues to be based on the principles of independence and transparency. Peer reviews organized by the Agency are an important part of the safety assessment structure in the Czech Republic. Bringing independent and internationally recognized expertise, missions to the Temelin and Dukovany nuclear power plants, organized under the IAEA umbrella, confirmed again at the end of last year their very good status in all aspects of safety. The missions also offered a number of ideas for further improvements. In this respect, allow me to use this opportunity to express once again appreciation to the individual member States who made their experts available and to the IAEA secretariat, in

particular the Department of Nuclear Safety and the Department of Technical Cooperation.

However, we are concerned at the attempts to exclude the Agency's peer review services from the regional Technical Cooperation Programme. The high level of safety required for nuclear installations and for workplaces with sources of radioactive and ionizing radiation, and physical protection from radiation, are among the constraints on any use of nuclear technologies, and it is logical that that principle be applied before any technical cooperation project is launched.

One hardly need reaffirm the importance of independent third-party peer reviews in maintaining and further developing safety and security levels for the use of nuclear energy and of ionizing radiation. The same applies to the complexity and the well-defined framework required for the conduct of the review services offered by the Agency. Worth mentioning, however, is the unique design of those review services, which allows for the sharing of experience gained and of the results achieved, at least among interested groups, such as users of similar technology or regulatory authorities. Offering a platform for the sharing of experience and information and for the discussion of common issues is one of the most important missions of the regional component of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

In conclusion, I should like to assure the Assembly of my Government's continuing commitment to supporting and expanding the Agency's role in international cooperation to promote the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation for the benefit of all Member States.

Mr. Tomka (Slovakia): Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the Danish presidency of the European Union on this agenda item, and we fully support its content. However, since the annual reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the General Assembly are traditionally of the highest interest to my delegation, I should like to take this opportunity to comment briefly on a few points from my national perspective.

We thank the Director General of the Agency, Mr. ElBaradei, for being with us in New York today and for presenting personally the report on the work of the Agency. We find the report, as well as his complementary remarks, to be factual and highly informative. Mr. ElBaradei's presence here today is even more appreciated when one considers his demanding work schedule, no doubt further intensified by his active participation in recent days in resolving the most pressing issues on the agenda of the international community.

The burden shouldered today by the Agency has become more complex since the three main missions of its mandate — technology, safety and verification — have grown more intertwined than ever before, owing largely to the evolving international security environment and to the increasing needs of economic development. Consequently, promoting the peaceful uses of atomic energy, together with ensuring its non-diversion to military purposes, poses an ever-growing challenge.

Here, I wish to put on record Slovakia's firm support for the further strengthening of the effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards. The right path forward lies in bringing into force the Additional Protocols to safeguards agreements with as many States as possible, in the universalization of the system and, ultimately, in developing integrated safeguards.

Slovakia, having concluded a new safeguards agreement with the Agency in 1998, is considering appropriate steps for implementing the provisions of the Additional Protocol it has signed, including the formal measures necessary to bring it into force. My country is also ready to support an early completion of the Agency's work on developing integrated safeguards, in close cooperation with the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation and with other Member States.

The viability of the verification element in the Agency's mandate is even more crucial for sustaining the global non-proliferation regime, given that certain discouraging realities are still in place. I have in mind the fact that the Agency is still unable to fully perform its duties — as mandated by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and by the relevant Security Council resolutions — in respect of two States. The challenge to the non-proliferation regime is even greater in the light of recent reports that one of those States is in breach of its commitments under the NPT.

We commend the Security Council for the unanimous adoption of its resolution 1441 (2002) last Friday. We encourage Iraq to comply fully with that

resolution and with other relevant resolutions of the Council.

There are other concrete steps — although they are formally outside the purview of the IAEA — to qualitatively consolidate the NPT non-proliferation regime: a comprehensive nuclear test ban and a fissile material ban. Slovakia joins in the call for the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and for a renewal of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The completion of both of those undertakings is long overdue; the opportunity should not be missed. The process should enjoy the Agency's continued support and cooperation.

I now turn briefly to cooperation between Slovakia and the Agency. Slovakia is among the countries that operate peaceful nuclear facilities. According to our national energy strategy plan, nuclear energy will remain a substantial source of our energy production for the medium term. The safe operation of nuclear facilities continues to be our utmost priority. Bearing that in mind, we have, since joining the IAEA, promoted and participated in fruitful cooperation with the Agency. With regard to our most recent activities aimed at promoting nuclear safety, I should mention at least the establishment at Bratislava last April of the Centre for Nuclear Safety. The Centre is supported by the Swiss and the Slovak Governments. The objective is to create a network of nuclear safety experts in support of the nuclear authorities in the region.

The safety of nuclear installations is also a subject of bilateral cooperation with our neighbours. Meetings involving high governmental experts have been organized with all neighbouring countries to discuss issues of common interest and to exchange experiences in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We consider those meetings to be an important measure to promote confidence.

It is the responsibility of the nuclear community to promote nuclear safety in a more global way. Slovakia supports the Agency's initiatives aimed at contributing to a global nuclear safety regime through networking, through integrating its safety evaluation activities and through promoting adherence to international safety conventions. We support the Agency's cooperation with various parts of the United Nations system, with the European Union institutions and with other international bodies, such as the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Association of Nuclear Operators.

I cannot close without touching upon the important role of the Agency and of its activities in the field of combating terrorism. Slovakia welcomes the plan of action approved in principle by the Board of Governors of the Agency.

As for the outcome of today's General Assembly debate, the best message we can deliver to Vienna, in order to demonstrate our unwavering support for the Agency, would be the adoption by the largest possible majority of the draft resolution (A/57/L.14) now before us for consideration.

Mr. Kulyk (Ukraine): I would like to start by expressing my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for presenting the annual report on the work of the IAEA for the year 2001 and additional information on the main developments in the Agency's activities during 2002. I also wish to welcome the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Seychelles and Eritrea as new members of the IAEA.

Ukraine considers the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency to be a crucial part of overall efforts to ensure a safer and more secure world nuclear environment. Recently, the world has become more aware of what a terrorist threat can be all about if sophisticated technology is involved. We have to be absolutely clear that the treat of nuclear terrorism is potentially one of the most horrifying possibilities in that domain.

Ukraine commends the IAEA for the work done since last year's session of its General Conference. The Agency turned out to be quick in its response and in outlining a practical programme, which will be an important contribution to fighting the global nuclear terrorism. Member countries have to face the reality; these new challenges made a profound impact on the Agency's priorities while it had to fulfil its statutory obligations under rigid financial constraints.

It is imperative that we recognize and support the Agency's activities that require a sustained response to various emerging challenges. Though the public's environmental concerns about operational safety and waste disposal still exist, we have to look at the

Agency's role in the future of nuclear power. In the past year the Agency assisted its member States to improve their safety record, and it undoubtedly helps to restore public support for nuclear energy applications as an acceptable option for sustainable development.

We add our voice in support of a unique collaborative international effort under the auspices of the Agency: the International Project on Innovative Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). We commend the Agency for this project, which will fit user requirements in terms of economics, waste, safety and non-proliferation parameters. There we come to the most profound functions of the Agency, where it plays the important role of a catalyst for the social and economic development of its Member States. The needs and priorities of Member States are best served under the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, once again stressed the need for technology transfer as a prerequisite for development. The Ukrainian delegation underlined at the forty-sixth session of the IAEA General Conference that the Agency's active position in Johannesburg had contributed to the enhancement of awareness of nuclear technologies that are viewed as a facilitator of Agenda 21. At the same time, the Agency remains a key player in ensuring a more effective and transparent global nuclear safety regime worldwide through a proven and powerful mechanism of legally binding international instruments.

We are deeply convinced that to make Agenda 21 feasible due attention should be paid to the rectification of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident as an integral element of regional sustainable development. The Ukrainian delegation expresses its appreciation to the Agency for its initiative to establish a forum of experts as part of the new strategy for recovery.

Ukraine welcomes the IAEA's active role in strengthening the regime of physical protection of nuclear material and in steps that have been taken with regard to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. It is our firm belief that additional efforts should be extended to convene as soon as possible a diplomatic conference for the adoption of an amended Convention.

Ukraine has always been a steady supporter of the nuclear-non-proliferation regime. We appreciate the fact that the Agency continues to be the core of that regime, through its verification system. Any Member State's failure to fully implement safeguards agreements would jeopardize the overall efforts of the world community to curb nuclear proliferation. Ukraine strongly supports binding verification agreements to provide immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to enable the Agency to carry out its United Nations mandate.

Ukraine considers concrete steps in further strengthening safeguards mechanisms to be a part of the Agency's integrated framework concept and thus looks forward to continuing to play a productive role in the progressive development of safeguards.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): Like others, I want to begin by thanking Director General ElBaradei for his comprehensive statement on the achievements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and on the challenges it will face over the coming year. We would also like to express our appreciation for his leadership in this challenging year for the Agency, a year of course in which it was Australia's honour to chair the Board of Governors. Australia expresses its appreciation for the close and productive working relationship we enjoyed with Mr. ElBaradei during our period as Chair. We look forward to continuing our close association with him and the members of the IAEA secretariat.

The alarming and tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the developments since then, including the terrorist bombing in Bali, have highlighted the importance of promoting and protecting international frameworks which ensure peace and security for all of us. The Agency's pivotal role in ensuring the safe and peaceful development of nuclear science and nuclear energy has been underlined by the heightened concern about the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, together with the spectre of nuclear or radiological terrorism. Australia commends the Agency for the substantive progress it has made in tackling these issues.

Australia is strongly committed to the three pillars — nuclear safety, verification and technology — which form the basis of the Agency's mandate. We believe that the global implementation of an effective system of strengthened safeguards delivers universal security benefits. In Australia's view, the Agency's verification and promotional activities are mutually reinforcing in nature. Strengthening the credibility of

the Agency's verification system promotes confidence in nuclear science and technology.

A priority for Australia is achieving wide application of the IAEA's Additional Protocols on strengthened safeguards. The Additional Protocols represent the new verification standard for safeguards under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This means that the IAEA safeguards system should come quickly to be regarded as comprising both classical safeguards and the Additional Protocols.

Australia was the first member State to ratify an Additional Protocol and is pleased to be the first country in which integrated safeguards are being applied. Australia's experience demonstrates that integrated safeguards deliver benefits in terms of increased efficiency as well as effectiveness. We urge States that have yet to sign and ratify an Additional Protocol to do so as soon as possible.

The ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament will not be achieved without effective measures which ensure nuclear non-proliferation. The 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT identified the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty as one of the most urgent disarmament and non-proliferation steps that the international community should take. We commend the Agency for its ongoing contribution to the dialogue on possible verification requirements for a fissile material cut-off treaty.

There is a continuing need to remain vigilant in looking for clandestine nuclear-weapon programmes. Two States continue to test the non-proliferation regime, and they, of course, are the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iraq.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent admission that it is developing a uranium-enrichment programme for nuclear weapons, clearly in breach of its obligations under the NPT and the 1994 Agreed Framework between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is of grave concern. As a party to the NPT, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has an unconditional obligation to comply with its NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency. It must move quickly to comply with its non-proliferation obligations, including full cooperation with the Agency. The international community must send a strong and unified message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that its nuclear-weapon activities are totally unacceptable and have no international support.

Australia welcomes the Agency's efforts pertaining to Iraq and expresses its deep concern over Iraq's continued non-compliance with Security Council resolutions requiring it to provide the Agency with the access and cooperation necessary to implement its Security Council mandate in Iraq. Australia strongly supports the resumption of inspections and looks to Iraq to cooperate fully with IAEA inspectors and those of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) in achieving the complete implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Agency has a central role to play in responding to the threats of nuclear terrorism. We commend the Agency for responding quickly to this threat, including through projects funded by the newly created Nuclear Security Fund. As a contributor, Australia urges those member States that have not already done so to contribute to the Fund, financially and through in-kind measures. The security of nuclear and radioactive materials must be a priority for all countries.

We welcome the Agency's progress in strengthening the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. There is an obvious need to further improve the control of high-activity sources to protect against the risk of radiological terrorism.

Australia supports the work of the Agency to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We call on all delegations participating in this process to work constructively to achieve a consensus on outstanding issues.

The Agency has an essential role in establishing a global nuclear safety culture. Australia has contributed to regional and international efforts to enhance the understanding of how a safety culture can be implemented in nuclear organizations. A particular focus for Australia is the promotion of improvements in the international safety regime for research reactors.

Australia also continues to promote constructive dialogue between shipping and coastal States on the safe transport of radioactive material. We are honoured to have been invited by the Director General to chair the International Conference on the Safety of Transport

of Radioactive Material, to be held in Vienna in July next year.

It is gratifying to see the very strong level of support for technical cooperation across the Agency's membership. Australia is pleased to have been able to increase to $1.995 million (Australian) its voluntary contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) for 2003, which is well above the 2003 rate of attainment of 90 per cent.

Australia has been pleased to contribute to the IAEA's technical cooperation activities. We also contribute significantly to activities funded through our extrabudgetary project entitled "The Application of Radioisotope Technology to Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific". We continue to provide strong support to the Agency's Regional Cooperative Agreement for the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. ElBaradei has highlighted the Agency's role in promoting sustainable development through the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy in such a way that all nations benefit. At this critical point in history, member States must maintain the momentum for the Agency's work on strengthened safeguards and other verification activity. We will continue to strongly support the Agency as it implements its programmes and adapts to meet new challenges.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): At the outset, my delegation would like to commend Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and his staff for the dedication and commitment with which they continue to discharge their responsibilities.

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to all areas of the Agency's work and is strongly committed to the Agency's objectives. Over the past 46 years, the IAEA has played a crucial role in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, particularly through its technical cooperation projects and its normative work in strengthening global nuclear safety standards. The Agency also plays an indispensable role in the maintenance of international peace and security by virtue of the mandates entrusted to it by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Security Council and regional non-proliferation agreements. The effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system is central to the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy by fostering confidence in the compliance of the States parties with their obligations to the NPT or other non-proliferation arrangements.

My delegation believes that the potential nuclear power holds for sustainable development should receive the wide recognition that it deserves. In this regard, my Government commends the secretariat of the IAEA for its efforts to promote the use of nuclear power for development at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held at Johannesburg last September. My country currently has 17 nuclear-power reactors in operation that account for over 40 per cent of our total electric power supply. If the same amount of electricity were generated by coal-fired power plants, our greenhouse gas emissions would be 20 per cent higher than the levels reflected in current statistics. As such, nuclear power offers a realistic option for meeting growing energy requirements in a manner consistent with the goals of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Thanks to the constant evolution of nuclear technology, the new generation of nuclear reactors under development will be equipped with enhanced safety features and be more economically competitive.

The crucial importance of nuclear safety cannot be overemphasized. The IAEA has made great strides in this field, including with regard to the measures taken to prepare for the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. We should build on these achievements and draw from them to more effectively address public concerns about the safety of nuclear power.

We also commend the secretariat of the IAEA for taking prompt action in mobilizing international cooperation against possible nuclear terrorism in the wake of 11 September. When it comes to nuclear safety in general and nuclear terrorism specifically, the primary responsibility for safety and security concerns rests with the individual countries in which nuclear installations are located. The Agency, however, has an important role to play in coordinating international efforts and in providing technical assistance to those in need of it. It is also important to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. In that regard, my Government looks forward to a speedy conclusion of negotiations on the amendment of the Convention.

The Republic of Korea has been a strong supporter of the Agency's efforts to strengthen its safeguards system. We believe that the Model Additional Protocol, adopted in 1997, offers the best hope for effectively dealing with new challenges on the safeguards front. We also welcome the completion of the conceptual framework for the integrated safeguards system. All of these achievements in the normative areas are imperative for nuclear non-proliferation. Nevertheless, no matter how intrusive a safeguards system may be, it may not always be effective enough to deter determined States from developing nuclear weapons. The political will and commitment of states to nuclear transparency and non-proliferation objectives is therefore important, too.

The long-standing North Korean nuclear issue has recently taken a drastic turn for the worse. The Republic of Korea is gravely concerned about the revelations about North Korea's clandestine nuclear programme, which is based on highly enriched uranium. Such a programme constitutes a clear violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), North Korea's safeguards agreement with the IAEA, the 1992 South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It also poses a serious threat to the peace and security of the Korean peninsula and beyond.

North Korea should dismantle its nuclear programme in a prompt and verifiable manner and come into full compliance with all of its bilateral and international non-proliferation commitments without further delay. Full compliance by North Korea is not only in its best interests, but also essential for the viability of the inter-Korean peace process.

Before concluding, I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the resolution, adopted at the forty-third session of the General Conference of the IAEA, to amend article VI of the Agency's Statute, which deals with the enlargement of the IAEA Board of Governors. We call upon all member States that have not yet done so to ratify the amendment promptly so that it can come into effect at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Marsh (United States of America): I would like, on behalf of my Government, to thank Mr. ElBaradei for his introduction to the General Assembly of the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is an excellent report. We see in this year's report a clear escalation of demands on the Agency. That is not a new phenomenon. In the face of new challenges and expanding needs over the past two decades, the IAEA has repeatedly been called upon to do more — more on nuclear safety, more on safeguards and, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, more on nuclear security.

There are many reasons why the international community turns to the IAEA as a means to address difficult problems. The Agency has a unique international charter and a proven track record of excellence. Time and again it has responded quickly, effectively and comprehensively to new challenges. It has deservedly earned a reputation as one of the most effective and well-managed of all the international organizations.

Today, the IAEA is confronted with some of the most difficult problems facing our world. These include the critical need to address non-compliance by Iraq and North Korea with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other non-proliferation commitments, the urgency of preventing acts of nuclear terrorism, and the continuing need to strengthen the international safeguards system.

States long ago realized that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would gravely undermine their security. For many years, the international community has laboured to create strong barriers to the further spread of nuclear weapons. Over time, a web of international treaties, verification systems, export controls and bilateral and multilateral commitments has been woven that collectively we refer to as the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The bedrock of that regime is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the comprehensive IAEA safeguards agreements that it mandates. The commitments made by States to abide by the terms of the NPT and their safeguards agreements are binding international obligations. But commitments are without value if they are not backed by full compliance. Both Iraq and North Korea have accepted those commitments, and both are in serious violation of them. Additionally, the international

community has concerns regarding the commitment of other States.

Throughout the seven years of United Nations weapons inspections, Iraq lied about its nuclear capabilities and its programme to develop nuclear weapons. It continues to violate its international obligations by withholding experimental data, material account logs and other nuclear-related technical documents. Ongoing illicit procurement activity, including attempts to acquire thousands of high-strength aluminium tubes that can be used in gas centrifuges, suggests that Iraq is as intent as ever on attaining nuclear weapons and flouting its NPT requirements and Security Council mandates.

From 1991 to 1998, the IAEA Action Team largely succeeded in dismantling Iraq's nuclear weapons programme. Despite that achievement, Iraq's nuclear potential was not completely eliminated. It still possesses the scientific and technical expertise needed to develop nuclear weapons and, in the four-year absence of inspectors, has had increased opportunity to do so. In partnership with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), the Action Team is now poised to resume inspections in Iraq. Its role is to ensure verifiably that Iraq has entirely eliminated its nuclear-weapons programme. Security Council resolution 1441 (2002), adopted last Friday, gives Iraq one final chance to comply. Failure to do so will lead to serious consequences.

North Korea must also comply with its obligations. Let me be clear: North Korea has violated the NPT and its NPT safeguards agreement, violated the Agreed Framework and violated the Joint North-South Denuclearization Agreement. North Korea has been violating its NPT safeguards commitments since 1993.

The 1994 Agreed Framework between the United States and North Korea seemed to offer a means to address North Korean non-compliance. It would not provide a shield for North Korea's continued violations of the NPT. Since 1994, the IAEA has maintained a continuous presence at North Korea's nuclear centre at Yongbyon, monitoring the freeze of the North's plutonium production capacity. But North Korea's recently revealed uranium enrichment programme for nuclear weapons represents an outrageous act of bad faith on North Korea's part. North Korea must completely and verifiably dismantle that programme. I am confident that the IAEA is prepared, as appropriate, to be part of resolving North Korea's unquestionable breach of its non-proliferation commitments.

Meanwhile, the world community must prevail in its fight against the heightened threat posed by international terrorism. Last March, the IAEA Board of Governors approved a comprehensive programme to strengthen nuclear material security worldwide. That programme is now under way, and the IAEA is providing valuable support to strengthen the ability of States to combat nuclear terrorism through better physical protection, better nuclear material accounting and control systems, and better control of other radioactive materials. The IAEA is helping to improve the regulatory structures and practices of States and to enhance emergency response capabilities. In these and many other ways, it is reducing the risks posed by terrorists and is benefiting us all.

Regrettably, funding for this work, which comes almost exclusively from member States' voluntary contributions, is not adequate. The United States has provided much of the funding for this work to date. I urge all IAEA members to support this work and to provide the necessary funding. The modest cost of this effort to thwart nuclear terrorism is an unparalleled bargain compared with the cost of nuclear terrorism.

The discovery of Iraq's secret nuclear weapons programme in the early 1990s touched off criticism of IAEA safeguards for failing to detect Iraq's deception sooner. Based on lessons learned in Iraq, the IAEA has crafted an entirely new dimension to safeguards. Over the past 10 years, intensive efforts by the IAEA and its member States have led to the adoption of a new Model Additional Protocol. In States where Additional Protocols are in force, the IAEA has new safeguards tools and capabilities that strengthen its ability to detect secret or undeclared nuclear activities. States now have the opportunity to help strengthen international safeguards and, by doing so, to strengthen their own national security. My Government commends all those States that have already brought their Protocols into force and urges all others to do so as quickly as possible. In that connection, I am pleased to recall that President Bush transmitted the voluntary United States Protocol to our Senate for advice and consent to ratification on 9 May of this year.

In conclusion, whether countering non-compliance, terrorism or gaps in safeguards, the IAEA brings commitment and competence to the tasks at hand. The men and women who make up the IAEA secretariat have consistently demonstrated noteworthy dedication and professionalism.

But it is abundantly clear that the IAEA can continue to excel only if it receives the support it needs from its member States. And the facts are nothing short of alarming. The Director General has repeatedly warned that inadequate funding is bringing the safeguards system ever closer to the brink of failure. In 2002, the safeguards system is underfunded by tens of millions of dollars. States bent on pursuing nuclear weapons will have an ever easier time if safeguards become ineffective. The IAEA's safeguards budget needs to be increased so that the IAEA can implement the effective safeguards we need.

The IAEA's programme to counter nuclear terrorism also falls short of the funding it needs for full implementation of the programme approved by the Board last March. In short, collectively we have put tremendous responsibilities on the IAEA's shoulders. The key question is whether collectively we will provide the necessary support for it to handle those responsibilities now and in the future. Let us all ensure that the organization has the support it both needs and deserves.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): I would like to begin by commending the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, on the comprehensive report on the work of the Agency and by pledging my Government's full cooperation with the IAEA under his leadership in the years to come.

From the earliest days of discovery and experimentation with nuclear science, nuclear and radioactive materials have held extraordinary potential — the potential for being of great benefit to humankind, as well as for causing devastating harm. We appreciate the important role that the International Atomic Energy Agency has been performing over the years to ensure that nuclear technologies and materials are used for peaceful purposes only.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Armenia assumed an obligation to place all its peaceful nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Shortly after its formal accession to the Treaty, Armenia concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA, which made it possible for us to reactivate our peaceful nuclear programme with the assistance of the IAEA and thus to alleviate the severe constraints on our electricity supply.

Nuclear power, which currently supplies about one sixth of electricity globally, is a principal source that could provide electricity on a large scale, with practically no greenhouse gas emissions. Views on the future of nuclear power, however, are still mixed because of safety and non-proliferation concerns. In the light of the present international situation, enhancement of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is of utmost importance.

Armenia has consistently supported the role of the Agency in the effective maintenance and consolidation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We fully share the objectives of the international community regarding promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. Our commitment to non-proliferation is being additionally fulfilled through the establishment of an effective system of export control that has not hindered our capacity to continue cooperating in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. While Armenia still maintains its reliance on the nuclear energy option, increased efforts are being made to utilize other energy sources efficiently.

Armenia has come a long way in producing the legislative and regulatory framework for national nuclear regulation. The Government has put in place a stringent system of export controls to rule out the illicit diversion of material, equipment or technology in the nuclear field. The inter-agency process for submitting the Additional Protocol to the agreement between the Republic of Armenia and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the application of safeguards has been completed and presented to the National Assembly for ratification. As soon as it is done, Armenia will submit to the Agency the initial declaration and our programmes for the coming 10-year period for development of the nuclear fuel cycle.

In recent years, the Armenian authorities have continued the process of improving the legislative basis in order to comply with international standards and to reinforce its commitment to the regime of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Armenia's National Assembly

has adopted two essential laws in that regard: a law on the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and a law on licensing.

Armenia has welcomed the entry into force on 18 June 2001 of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and will soon join that important Convention.

Safety is primarily a national responsibility. We also recognize that it is an equally legitimate international concern. Like environmental practices, nuclear safety has implications that may far exceed national boundaries. Nuclear safety has always been a matter of the highest priority for the Government of Armenia. That priority is appropriately reflected in Armenia's commitment to various international treaties and agreements.

The issue of the safe operation of the Armenian nuclear power plant is under the constant attention of the President of Armenia. The IAEA has regularly inspected the Armenian nuclear power plant since its reactivation in 1995. Experts from various countries have rated highly the level of nuclear safety at Armenia's nuclear power plant, and have proposed to initiate a new programme aimed at further upgrading the plant's safety.

During the past two years, the relevant Armenian authorities, in collaboration with the IAEA, have focused on technical cooperation projects in the areas of various nuclear applications. At present, Armenia is cooperating with the Agency in many national, regional and interregional technical projects. Nearly a dozen of the Agency's technical cooperation projects are being implemented in Armenia at the national level in such fields as energy and nuclear power planning, radioactive waste management, ageing control, oncology, radiology safety and accident analysis, technical support and human-factor management. There are also several bilateral projects in the field of nuclear applications, and we greatly value the cooperation with countries providing technical, financial and institutional assistance in this field.

Let me conclude by reiterating Armenia's readiness for increased partnership with the Agency in carrying out its universal mission to meet the challenges posed by nuclear applications. I would also like to inform the Assembly that Armenia has joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.14.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.47

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

47th plenary meeting
Monday, 11 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

Agenda item 39

Question of the Falklands Islands (Malvinas)

The President: I should like to inform representatives that, following consultations regarding agenda item 39 on the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and taking into account General Assembly decision 56/410 of 26 November 2001, it is proposed that the General Assembly decide to postpone consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session.

May I take it therefore that the Assembly, taking into account decision 56/410, wishes to defer consideration of this item and include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session?

It was so decided (decision 57/511)

Agenda items 21 (d) and 37

Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Draft resolution (A/57/L.13/Rev.1)

The President: The General Assembly will consider sub-item (d) of agenda item 21, "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan"; and agenda item 37, "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" and draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1 entitled "Open-ended panel of the General Assembly on 'Afghanistan: one year later'".

The idea of organizing a panel discussion on Afghanistan as an interactive dialogue with interested Member States has received overwhelming support from many countries concerned, including the Security Council members, the neighbouring countries and many influential States, such as Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, just to name a few.

This panel discussion is also very closely intertwined with my own efforts as the President of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly to revitalize its meetings.

These were the reasons that I decided to link this panel, scheduled for 18 November, with this year's plenary session on Afghanistan, to be held on 6 December. I do strongly believe that the panel discussion can enrich this year's commemoration of the first anniversary of the Bonn Conference and could lead the United Nations to specific conclusions in terms of post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan,

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02-68435 (E)

thereby providing new recommendations for future United Nations activities in this domain.

To achieve these goals, I ask you to be prepared for such a discussion. What I envisage as very important are our attempts to find out what were the lessons learned by the United Nations in Afghanistan. The panel should also give us an opportunity to see the consequences of the decisions adopted by the United Nations and to find out if these decisions were properly implemented. What are the results that these decisions helped us to achieve? Should we modify our humanitarian activities and economic assistance in Afghanistan? What else needs to be done in order for us to achieve United Nations goals in Afghanistan sooner and more effectively? I do truly hope that we will be able to meet these criteria.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen (Under-Secretary-General, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management): Under operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1, the General Assembly decides to convene, on 18 November 2002, an open-ended panel on Afghanistan, which will have two consecutive sessions, one from 9 to 11 a.m., and the other, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1, no additional expenditure would be required, since the open-ended panel would be convened on a date and time when the plenary would not be in session. The related meeting servicing costs would be met, therefore, from overall resources earmarked for the meetings of the plenary.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 57/8).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 21 and agenda item 37.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Mr. Singh (India): At the outset, let me compliment the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on its completion of 45 years as a unique multidisciplinary international organization, functioning to fulfil its mandate to the satisfaction of all its stakeholders. The Agency is a unique professional body in the area of nuclear science and technology, with the ability and wherewithal to provide solutions to various issues concerning all of us. The Agency has not shied away from adding new dimensions to its activities, while at the same time maintaining a careful balance among all its statutory activities.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development recently concluded its work in Johannesburg. The threat to our global climate due to increasing carbon dioxide emission is even more evident than in the past. Notwithstanding the important role of renewable and other clean energy technologies, and given the magnitude of this problem, there can be no doubt that nuclear power is an inevitable option at the present state of development of advanced energy technologies and can meet the development aspirations of a large fraction of the world's population, while at the same time conforming to the criteria of sustainability. It is ironic that, in spite of its large energy potential, with the capability of meeting sustainable worldwide energy needs without any real or significant environmental impact, the unfounded misconceptions about nuclear energy still dominate and have impeded sustainable development.

At the present juncture, one sees nuclear power simultaneously witnessing stagnation, renaissance and growth in different parts of the world. During the 1990s, the gross generation of nuclear electricity in Asia grew by 63.7 per cent, and the availability of global nuclear energy increased from 73 per cent to over 82 per cent, which is equivalent to adding 33 gigawatts of new generating capacity.

There is growing activity to extend the lives of existing nuclear power plants. This exercise is equivalent to building new reactors in those countries. An integrated view of technology, safety, safeguards and the newly emerging scenario with respect to nuclear terrorism is, however, necessary to find holistic

answers that can eliminate the barriers to large-scale development of nuclear power in a sustainable manner.

Recognizing the important role of nuclear power in meeting long-term energy needs, India has accorded high priority to the self-reliant development of nuclear power in the country. This has enabled a strong indigenous capability in all aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle. Presently, construction on eight more reactors is in progress — the largest number of reactors currently under construction in any country. These units include six pressurized heavy water reactors of indigenous design and two 1,000 megawatt units being set up in cooperation with the Russian Federation. Construction on all projects is progressing in advance of their respective schedules.

Our 14 operating nuclear power reactors have together registered an impressive 85 per cent average annual capacity factor during the past year and, at the same time, have maintained an excellent safety record. In line with keeping our commitment to the preservation of the environment, most of the operating power plants have also obtained Environment Management System (EMS) ISO 14001 certification.

Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We will reach a total nuclear capacity of 6,680 megawatts by 2008, and we intend to achieve 10,000 megawatts by 2012 and 20,000 megawatts by 2020. In order to achieve that objective, given the nuclear resource profile available within the country, we have also carried out considerable work on the design and development of a plutonium-uranium-oxide-fuelled, 500-megawatt prototype fast breeder reactor at Kalpakkam. While the pre-project activities for construction of that reactor are already in progress, we will soon launch the main project.

The expansion of our nuclear power programme is being appropriately supported by the opening of two new uranium mines in Jharkhand State in India. We have also undertaken pre-project activities for the commencement of uranium mining at three more sites. In addition, we have taken significant steps, including reducing specific energy consumption in heavy water production and compressing the construction schedule, so as to make nuclear power even more competitive. In fact, the Indian track record on export controls and fulfilment of its international obligations has been exemplary, to the extent that India has been described as a classic non-proliferator.

While the Indian programme is designed to cater to the country's long-term energy needs, the recent awareness of the impact of carbon dioxide emissions on the global climate has necessitated expeditious large-scale development of nuclear power in India. External additionalities in the nuclear power sector, for which there is a large market in India, could help that process further. However, our efforts to accelerate the development of nuclear power as a sustainable means of producing the clean energy needed to meet the development aspirations of one sixth of humanity are faced with the restrictive export policies of certain countries. It is common knowledge that India's nuclear programme is unique by virtue of its indigenous and comprehensive capabilities, and therefore any proliferation concern over external supplies to India is unfounded. Making external additionalities in nuclear power development in India subject to such irrelevant and unfounded concerns will only increase the dependence on fossil fuel, resulting in damage to the global environment.

Our atomic energy programme has accorded top priority to safety in all its activities and has kept pace with needs, accompanied by the expansion of the nuclear power programme and by the utilization of nuclear technologies for research, health, agricultural and industrial purposes. We have gained close to 200 reactor-years of operating experience, with a good track record in maintaining the safety of operating personnel, of the public and of the environment. Needless to say, safety cannot be divorced from technology. However, it is unfortunate that, in practice, technologies continue to be denied to us, even for systems important to safety.

The IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) is a most appropriate and timely measure and will help to overcome barriers to the growth of nuclear power for global sustainable development. We are convinced that such technological solutions are the need of the hour and that they provide superior, cost-effective and comprehensive alternatives to the current segmental approach of dealing separately with technology, safety and safeguards. We have taken an active part in that programme, which the Agency is implementing through extra budgetary resources, and we have also provided cost-free experts. We feel that the time has

come for the Agency to absorb the INPRO programme into its regular budget.

We are glad that the Agency responded promptly to the need for nuclear security following the tragic events of 11 September 2001 by, among other things, setting up an Advisory Group on Nuclear Security. We should eliminate any possibility for terrorists to exploit the potential of using nuclear material and radioactive sources, particularly for blackmail. Although the prime responsibility for the security and safety of nuclear and other radioactive materials and of nuclear facilities rests and must rest with States themselves, the Agency's additional activities can contribute meaningfully to protection against nuclear terrorism. As it does so, we should ensure that it does not add unduly to the sense of apprehension that exists in many quarters concerning the safety of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

India has acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which reinforces its commitment to international instruments against terrorism in general and against nuclear terrorism in particular. More than four decades ago, we in India established strict measures for the physical protection of nuclear material during its use, storage and transport. A multidisciplinary expert group at the highest level ensures that the appropriate measures are implemented in that regard. Such measures are being appropriately upgraded through technological advancements. In addition, an internal physical protection advisory service exists. We have a specially designed human resource development programme to train personnel at various levels for that purpose.

The orphan sources in many countries have been a cause of concern. We have collaborated with the Agency in providing indigenously developed equipment, including an aerial gamma-survey system, and the services of our experts for a ground and aerial survey to search for orphan sources in Georgia.

We are glad that the Agency is dealing with the issue of knowledge management. The gaining of nuclear knowledge in certain parts of the world is an important challenge. The nuclear knowledge pool in India is very large and is expanding in consonance with the rapid growth of the country's nuclear energy programme. One of the challenges that must be addressed by all of us who are engaged in nuclear technology development is to promote a knowledge-based holistic approach across the entire spectrum of the technology-society interface. Further, the linkage among society, industry and the national programme must be visible to college students so that they recognize that there are challenges that need solutions and are motivated to find them. We need to distinguish knowledge transfer from technology transfer, which has obvious constraints that arise out of the commercial context. Knowledge, on the other hand, is enhanced by sharing it with worthy scholars who can sustain the process and also with those who can use it to find new solutions of societal interest.

I must emphasize that any technology will have its associated problems. However, the solutions to such problems also lie in technology. In the evolution of civilization, there have been several examples of technology allowing the enhancement of the quality of life. In the process, some new issues of concern arose; however, such issues were satisfactorily resolved through the further application of technology. We have seen that in the context of energy, transportation, material processing, food, human health and many other areas of human endeavour. Technological empowerment is thus the need of the hour. Continuity of nuclear knowledge and empowerment through nuclear technology to promote global peace and prosperity are our collective responsibility, and we can fulfil that responsibility through the unique organization of the IAEA.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Mexican delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and to all the Agency's staff for their excellent work throughout the year in order to accomplish the many tasks assigned to them by Member States and to confront new challenges with limited financial resources.

The report of the IAEA's activities in 2001 duly reflects the Agency's achievements in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies and the transfer of those technologies to the developing countries, as well as its efforts to improve the effective regime of nuclear safety and an efficient verification system.

Mexico welcomes the recent approval by the IAEA General Conference of the admission of Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan and the Seychelles to membership of the

Agency, thus broadening the universal commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are also pleased by the advances made in the strengthening of safeguards, particularly with the approval of a conceptual framework for integrated safeguards and the implementation of those safeguards on a priority basis in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

As regards physical safety and security, Mexico shares the international community's concerns about measures to strengthen the Agency's work aimed at combating and preventing acts of nuclear terrorism. We welcome the progress made to date through the adoption of an action plan to combat nuclear terrorism and through the establishment of a Nuclear Security Fund through voluntary contributions. In this context, and in order to update harmonize views, Mexico is actively promoting the inclusion of ideas and definitions adopted in other international instruments with respect to the definition of illicit conduct; cooperation in judicial matters and extradition; and the development of a draft protocol to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, a fundamental instrument for strengthening measures to prevent a terrorist act against nuclear materials and installations.

We also recognize the Agency's efforts to improve the quality and impact of the Technical Cooperation Programme through the development of better projects in keeping with national priorities and with enhanced socio-economic impact, promoting the optimal use of national and regional capacities. Mexico welcomes the request made by the IAEA General Conference to Mr. ElBaradei that enhanced efforts be made to improve external contracting or subcontracting mechanisms so as to strengthen technical cooperation among developing countries.

Mexico is very pleased by the Agency's progress, in particular with respect to the promotion of food security, the management of water resources and improved human health. These are clear illustrations of the use of nuclear science and technology in support of sustainable development. Mexico welcomes the application of sterile insect technologies because of their considerable effect on human, animal and plant health, with special emphasis on their technical and economic viability. Mexico also believes that it is important to recognize the success of the application of isotopic techniques to the sustainable management of water resources.

We believe that safety and security are among the top priorities in the peaceful uses and applications of nuclear energy. Mexico participated in the second review meeting of contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, at which we submitted our national report. That report was welcomed by the contracting parties, as it reflects the smooth functioning of the Laguna Verde nuclear power plant and the proper implementation of the Convention's provisions through our National Commission of Nuclear Safety and Safeguards, Mexico's nuclear regulatory agency.

Finally, Mexico attaches great importance to the culture of security and, above all, prevention, as reflected in the Agency's 2001 report, in which reference is made to the seminar on self-assessment training for a culture of safety and security, held under IAEA auspices at the Laguna Verde plant in June 2001.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): I would like at the outset to express our appreciation to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his introduction of the Agency's report and the comprehensive statement highlighting its role and activities.

The report portrays a wide range of scientific challenges and how these are sought to be met through safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is gratifying to note that the Agency has continued its invaluable contributions through the strategy of a unified approach to providing technical assistance, safety measures and verification mechanisms. We are hopeful that its role in these endeavours will be further strengthened in the future for the benefit of all States, especially the developing countries.

My delegation wishes to emphasize the importance of promoting a framework of confidence and cooperation within which the transfer of nuclear technology and materials for peaceful purposes can take place, as they play an important role in catering to the requirements of national development. This is essential even for countries that are endowed with abundant natural resources, both current and potential.

Energy has played and will continue to play a principal role in promoting economic and industrial growth, as well as improved human well-being. However, the substantial increase in global energy consumption in the coming decades, which is foreseen in the Agency's report, will be driven principally by the

developing world, especially in Asia, and it cannot be met through resources that are finite. Hence, in our view, nuclear energy remains a strong option offering a sustainable energy future.

In some countries of the Asia-Pacific region, nuclear power is already an important contributor to electricity generation and its role is projected to expand in order to support overall economic growth in the region. This calls for enhanced technical cooperation to facilitate the sustainable development of the developing countries. It is therefore gratifying to note that the transfer of nuclear science and technology to those countries through cooperative programmes — especially in areas such as food and agriculture, fighting disease, managing water resources and ensuring environmental protection — continues to be a principal objective of the Agency.

Indonesia has steadily supported the role of the IAEA in assisting States parties to launch projects within the framework of peaceful uses of nuclear energy based on each country's choices and decisions and the principle of sustainable development. Those activities have facilitated a multiplicity of functions, most notably the optimal utilization of resources, the planning and implementation of nuclear power projects, monitoring their performance, plant reliability and improving technical skills.

According to the report, in the field of health, nuclear techniques have much to offer in the diagnosis and control of non-communicable diseases. New tools have also come to be utilized for combating infectious diseases. Nuclear and related biotechnologies can also facilitate the achievement of food security and address problems relating to malnutrition that afflict a large segment of people living in the developing world.

As far as the aforementioned endeavours are concerned, we gratefully acknowledge the Agency's role, among others, in organizing a regional technical cooperation project on nutritional studies with the participation of Indonesia and other members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, which also have availed themselves of the Agency's nuclear safety review services and assistance.

The question of ensuring a high level of nuclear safety and security continues to be of critical importance to the international community. An attack on a nuclear power plant or other nuclear installation could result in a massive release of radioactive material with its attendant consequences. Such a dire prospect has been further heightened by nuclear terrorism, which represents a potent danger to global peace and security. The spectre that those weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists demonstrates the priority that all nations must accord to that complex and interrelated issue.

My delegation is, therefore, gratified to note, in that context, that the IAEA is already engaged in a wide range of activities pertinent to combating nuclear terrorism, including nuclear safety cooperation among relevant organizations and member States, programmes to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, as well as other radioactive sources, and providing advisory services against theft and sabotage.

Currently, the Agency is also considering expansion of the scope and reach of its safety and security services and undertaking a review of existing guidelines and conventions to ensure that they are comprehensive and effective. Meanwhile, the establishment of internationally agreed standards of safety of nuclear installations, the coordination of efforts at the national, regional and global levels and the fostering of information exchange have become imperative.

The Agency's safeguards work as a worldwide system of monitoring and inspection of nuclear materials remains indispensable. States parties to the NPT and member States of the IAEA have addressed the question of deficiencies through the "93 plus 2" programme of enhanced safeguards and have negotiated an additional protocol, to which Indonesia has been one of its early adherents.

The aforementioned programme extends the reach of the Agency's inspectors beyond declared activities, requires Governments to provide extensive information on research and industrial activities, as well as on imports and exports of dual use technologies, and provides the Agency with a comprehensive profile of a country's nuclear activities, enabling IAEA to draw conclusions about its future intentions.

In conclusion, my delegation recognizes the important role of the IAEA as an information source and as a substantial contributor to sustainable development. That has become essential in the context of expanding nuclear programmes in Asia. Innovative projects are under way in many countries, under the

Agency's auspices, that will identify promising technologies.

As in the past, the IAEA, within limited resources, has ensured the effective implementation of a programme that made a constructive contribution to the needs and interests of the developing nations. It also has played an important role in assisting those countries in improving their scientific and technological capabilities.

Mr. Santiago (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated countries Bolivia and Chile.

I reiterate our satisfaction at seeing that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to be a centre of excellence in promotional and security activities. Our countries appreciate the relations they have with the Agency and, thus, we congratulate Director General Mohamed ElBaradei on his efficient guidance of the secretariat.

The technical cooperation activities promoted by the IAEA have a positive impact on aspirations for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. That is why our countries stress the need to maintain a balance between the Agency's three main pillars. We attach great importance to the potential of technical cooperation, one of the Agency's pillars, for supporting developing countries in the various areas of applying scientific and nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

We highlight in particular a new IAEA-supported technical cooperation project designed to exploit and manage water resources related to the Guarani aquifer system, involving Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, aimed at expanding and preserving drinking water resources.

Along other lines, our countries consider positive the linkage of the IAEA with other multilateral spheres, particularly with the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In that context, we recall the project entitled Brazil: profile of a country in the development of sustainable energy, developed for the Summit by a committee of experts, in which IAEA technical personnel also participated.

We currently share the concern for the need to strengthen efforts carried out by the Agency to contribute preventing the possibility of terrorist acts against nuclear installations or their use of radioactive material. In that regard, we express our readiness to cooperate in efforts to confront that threat.

We encourage the IAEA secretariat to develop initiatives aimed at improving the level of security of nuclear installations, reactors and the fuel cycle, as well as at issuing updated standards. We recognize that important progress has been made in the area of establishing security standards.

We support in particular the development of the programme to improve the culture of security, for which our country is already serving as headquarters for related activities. We also appreciate the great value of the services of assessment, review and diagnostic missions related to nuclear security.

Similarly, and taking into account the fact that the MERCOSUR countries and Bolivia and Chile attach special importance to the secure transport of radioactive material, we recognize the progress made through IAEA General Conference resolutions and the effort made jointly by the member States and the secretariat during 2001 regarding the revision of relevant regulations, as well as action aimed at their effective incorporation by transport organizations.

We also observe with satisfaction that more countries are using Transport Safety Appraisal Services assessment missions in implementing the Agency's transport regulations. We highlight in particular the event that took place this year in Brazil.

Our countries commit themselves to active participation in the 2003 International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material.

The recent IAEA General Conference, held in September, concluded with the adoption of a significant consensus on that subject. We hope that the 2003 International Conference will achieve a similar level of understanding and dialogue.

With regard specifically to the progress made by the secretariat in defining comprehensive safeguards, we believe that efforts should be intensified, not only for greater effectiveness, to prevent budgetary pressures that produce imbalances in the exercise of the Agency's statutory functions, but also for greater efficiency in verification activities.

In this regard, we also encourage the Agency to step up its positive interaction with other verification bodies, such as the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), which has been operating for 10 years. ABACC has been carrying out its verification activities, within its area of application, with great success. We believe that it is a great example of transparency and we hope that its current cooperative relationship with the IAEA will be intensified.

Finally, with regard to the regular budget, we believe that any possible increases in contributions should take into account the balance among the three basic pillars of the Agency, as well as the specific economic situation of our countries. The economic situation in our region prevents our countries from taking on heavy contribution burdens.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 14.

I call on the representative of Kuwait who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Ms. Al Mulla (Kuwait): I would like to invoke rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to call on the Assembly not to take action on the amendment contained in draft resolution A/57/L.17.

In making this statement, my delegation is following the precedent set last year by the representative of Australia, as the Chairman of the Board of Governors at the time. In view of the intensive and exhaustive process of consultations, which took place in Vienna and here in New York, and which resulted in broad agreement on the current text of the draft, it is the wish of the sponsors that the draft resolution be adopted as it stands.

The request for the motion is also based on the following considerations. First, the amendment contained in draft resolution A/57/L.17 refers to the announced acceptance by Iraq of the unconditional return of inspectors. That matter has already been addressed in the preambular part of draft resolution A/57/L.14. Secondly, the latter part of the amendment refers to an issue that has not been taken up by the Agency. The attention of delegates is drawn to the fact that the draft resolution relates to the work of the Agency. Thirdly, the text of the latter part of the amendment does not reflect in any way the language of resolution GC(46)/RES/15, as adopted by the General Conference of the Agency last September. Indeed, members of the Agency are in general agreement that the language in the draft resolution should faithfully reflect the language used in the resolutions of the General Conference.

The President returned to the Chair.

The representative of Iraq had the opportunity to submit amendments during the consultation process in Vienna. This was done in an open-ended meeting, but there was no support for the amendment submitted at that time for the reasons that I mentioned earlier. In New York, the representative of Iraq again presented the amendment in draft resolution A/57/L.17, and an appeal was made for its withdrawal. As the appeal was not heeded, we have had to resort to a motion that no action be taken. It is with regret that we do so. The motion is not meant to deny any Members the right of expression. It is meant to facilitate the adoption of the draft resolution as it stands. We appeal to all Members to support the motion that no action be taken.

The President: The representative of Kuwait has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17. Let me remind members that rule 74 reads:

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

Does any representative wish to speak?

I give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Salman (Iraq): My delegation regrets that there has been a request for a motion that no action be taken. This would prevent a Member State from expressing its views in a way that reflects the simple truth, as expressed by the Secretary-General. We also regret that such practices are being tolerated in the General Assembly. The General Assembly was not founded to rubber stamp to draft resolutions presented to it, but to ensure that Member States can fully exercise their rights, as enshrined in the Charter, thus ensuring the transparency and credibility of this organ.

Before action is taken, therefore, I would like to ask delegations to consider the outcome of their vote in setting a precedent on the future role of the Assembly. I kindly request the sponsors to reconsider their position. I would also like to remind Member States that the Charter provided for the right of substantive voting so as to ensure that Member States have the tools to present their positions on matters dealt with in the General Assembly. Taking this into account, I would like to request delegations, regardless of their positions with regard to the amendment that has been introduced, to vote against the motion for no action for the sake of transparency and for the credibility of this organ.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of Kuwait that no action be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yugoslavia

Against:

Algeria, Belarus, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Jordan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Viet Nam, Yemen

Abstaining:

Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela

The motion for no action was carried by 86 votes to 11, with 26 abstentions.

The President: Since the motion for no action has been adopted, no action will be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17. We shall therefore proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.14.

I shall call on those speakers wishing to speak in explanation of vote before the vote.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will reserve time to speak before the end of the discussion on this item, in order to explain its views and position on the nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula, in response to the statements made by several delegations this morning. Because of the statements made, we cannot support the draft resolution. We will vote against draft resolution A/57/L.14.

Mr. Salman (Iraq): With regard to the decision on the recent motion, my delegation has no other choice than to ask for a separate vote on the twelfth preambular paragraph for the following reasons. First, it does not welcome Iraq's decision of September to allow the unconditional return of the inspectors and the agreement with the Director-General of the IAEA on the practical arrangements needed for the inspections. Secondly, it introduced new language that is meant to accommodate political aims that will serve aggressive policies, taking into account that such language was not included in last year's resolution, before Iraq's decision to allow the inspectors to return. Thirdly, it does not refer to Iraq's cooperation since 2000 with the IAEA in carrying out its mandate according to the safeguards agreement. Having said that, I ask delegations to vote against the twelfth preambular paragraph.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote. Before proceeding,

I would like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become cosponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.14: Armenia, Belgium, Costa Rica, Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Jordan and Switzerland.

A separate vote has been requested on the third preambular paragraph, the twelfth preambular paragraph, operative paragraph 5 and operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14. Are there any objections to those requests? As there are none, we shall proceed accordingly.

I now put to the vote the third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel

Abstaining:

Ghana, Lesotho, Pakistan

The third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was adopted by 132 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the twelfth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of

Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Cuba, India, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Viet Nam

The twelfth preambular paragraph was adopted by 122 votes to none, with 15 abstentions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Ghana, India, Israel, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic

Operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was retained by 132 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

[*Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.*]

The President: I now put to the vote operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon

Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Viet Nam

Operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was retained by 134 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

The President: I now put to the vote draft resolution A/57/L.14 as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Abstaining:

Angola, Viet Nam

Draft resolution A/57/L.14 was adopted by 138 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions (resolution 57/9).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes on the resolution just adopted.

May I remind representatives that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Gosal (Canada): Canada voted in favour of resolution 57/9, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency"

While the resolution is, in fact, a report on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s activities for the last year, the report, unfortunately, does not reflect the most recent developments that have occurred, especially in regards to reports on the admission by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about its undeclared uranium enrichment programme. It is for this reason that Canada does not believe that the thirteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 11 accurately reflect the situation, which has evolved as of today.

However, we acknowledge that the resolution was drafted on the basis of consensus and that it only reflects developments which occurred up to 20 September 2002. It was on the basis of that consensus that Canada was able to continue to accept the language found in those paragraphs. However, we would like to note that Canada will continue to support the IAEA's efforts to address these issues as quickly as possible.

With respect to the resolution as a whole, we believe that a shorter, more focused text that does not attempt to summarize the General Conference's work should be considered in the future.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has consistently supported the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and appreciates the activities and achievements of the Agency in the past year. The Chinese delegation therefore voted in favour of resolution 57/9 on the report of the IAEA.

The Chinese delegation wishes to explain its position on the nuclear situation on the Korean peninsula. First, the principled position of the Chinese Government on this issue has not changed. We have always believed that the process of denuclearization, peace and stability on the Korean peninsula should be maintained. Secondly, concerned parties, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, should implement in good faith agreements reached. Thirdly, We stand for a peaceful solution of related issues through dialogue and consultation.

Mr. Shringla (India): India, a founding member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), attaches the highest importance and value to the objectives of the Agency. Since resolution 57/9 pertains to the activities of the IAEA, we voted in its favour.

Nonetheless, we have considerable difficulty with the third preambular paragraph. The language of that paragraph appears to link adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the freedom to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Article II of the Statute of the IAEA, which must guide all our deliberations on the activities of the Agency, calls on the Agency to

> "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world".

Further, the Statute stresses the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members. The purpose of these provisions of the Statute of the IAEA is obviously to encourage the unfettered access of member States to the peaceful uses of atomic energy without any discrimination whatsoever, albeit with appropriate safeguards.

The IAEA Statute predates the NPT and, besides, the Agency has not been designated as a Secretariat of the NPT. The Agency merely implements its safeguards for different member States in accordance with their agreements, and the concept of safeguards itself predates the NPT. The NPT is not an equitable treaty. Also the provisions of article VI of the NPT should not have been fulfilled by the nuclear weapon States. Therefore the NPT should not be used for discriminating between members of the IAEA. By inferring that adherence by itself to the NPT, on which my Government's views are well known, would imply access to peaceful uses of atomic energy, the resolution deviates from, and in fact derogates from the objectives enshrined in the statute of the IAEA. We have, therefore, been constrained to call for a vote on preambular paragraph 3 and I have voted against it.

Mr. Govrin (Israel): During the negotiations on this resolution in Vienna, Israel made no secret that while supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) annual report, it had reservations regarding certain paragraphs of this resolution, including operative paragraph 10. Israel stood ready to discuss the language of this paragraph and proposed alternative suggestions, but unfortunately, to no avail. Therefore, as it did last year, Israel lamentably had to vote against operative paragraph 10 of this resolution.

Israel believes that the language of operative paragraph 10 is clearly inconsistent with the consensus that was reached over the past eight years in the IAEA General Conference on the resolution entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East". Israel strongly opposes the attempt to use the IAEA annual report in order to change the meaning of this consensus resolution. I would like to remind representatives that the consensus on the resolution was difficult to establish in the first place and it has been maintained by preserving a delicately balanced text that all parties could accept.

Operative paragraph 10 of the resolution on the report of the IAEA interrupts this balance. Taking certain issues out of the overall context, while ignoring other elements of the consensus language, is bound to jeopardize the spirit of consensus and will ultimately harm the credibility of the resolutions of the IAEA General Conference.

For this reason Israel voted against operative paragraph 10 of this resolution. Israel has nevertheless

supported the resolution as a whole out of recognition of the IAEA's important role, especially when it comes to dealing with challenges to international security in the nuclear domain. Israel can only hope that next year, this unfruitful process of negotiations on this resolution will be avoided.

On behalf of the State of Israel I would like to take this opportunity to commend the IAEA Director General for presenting the annual report of the Agency to the General Assembly.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): I have taken the floor to explain Pakistan's position on the draft resolution entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" as contained in document A/57/L.14. My delegation has abstained on preambular paragraph 3 and operative paragraph 5.

The language of preambular paragraph 3 links the right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We have always maintained that this preambular paragraph on technical assistance should refer to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute only. Since Pakistan is not a party to the NPT, we cannot accept any commitment on its behalf.

Our second concern is the operative paragraph 5, on comprehensive safeguards, which we consider discriminatory and an attempt to keep developing countries from acquiring nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. In our view, the IAEA's role is to facilitate technical safeguards and not indulge in taking political decisions. However, our policy for promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy has enabled us to vote in favour for the resolution as a whole.

The President: We have now heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the vote. A representative has requested to express the right of reply. May I remind Members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to ten minutes for the first intervention, and five for the second one, and should be made by the delegates from their seats.

I now call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to state its position on the so-called nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in response to the statements made by the delegation of Denmark, who spoke on behalf of the European Union, and the delegations of Japan, Australia, the United States and South Korea.

My delegation would like, first, to point out that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is not a question to be dealt with at the United Nations or the IAEA, in view of its origin and substance. Solutions of any issue should be based on an objective and impartial analysis of the essence of the issue, while looking for realistic ways and means to address it.

The IAEA submits every year its annual report to the United Nations General Assembly that contains stereotyped and unrealistic contents on the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The unilateral and coercive debate that is undertaken, as we see today, does not in any manner assist in arriving at a proper solution.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula originated when the United States massively stockpiled nuclear weapons in South Korea and its vicinity, threatening the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Against the background of the then-prevailing international political environment of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the United States raised the so-called nuclear doubt about our country with the aim of destroying us. This issue is, in essence, a product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and, therefore, should be resolved between the two countries.

In 1994, the Agreed Framework was signed between the two countries in order to address the nuclear issue, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been implementing it in good faith. If the Agreed Framework were to be implemented, it would automatically follow that the safeguards agreement would be carried out.

Under the Agreed Framework, we froze the nuclear facilities considered by the United States as its concern. We continue to maintain the freeze and have completed the storage of spent fuel. Thus, we have long ago carried out our obligations under the Agreed Framework. However, the United States is not carrying out any of its obligations under the Agreed Framework. Under article I of the Framework, the United States is obliged to provide light water reactors to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the year 2003 in return for the freezing by the Democratic

People's Republic of Korea of graphite moderated reactors and their related facilities.

Eight years have passed since we froze our nuclear facilities, but the United States has only recently started the ground concrete tamping for the light water reactor. Prospects for construction of the light water reactor are very bleak. That will only result in our suffering an annual loss of 1,000 megawatts in 2003, when the first light water reactor was scheduled to be completed, and in 2004, when the second light water reactor was scheduled to be completed. Thereafter, we will suffer an annual loss of 2,000 megawatts.

Under article 2 of the Framework, the two sides are obliged to move towards full normalization of their political and economic relations. Over the past eight years, however, the United States has persistently pursued its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and has maintained economic sanctions against it. The United States has gone so far as to list the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of the "axis of evil".

Under article 3 of the Framework, the United States is obliged to give formal assurances to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, the United States has put our country on its list of targets for a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

Under article 4 of the Framework, and in paragraph 7 of its confidential minutes, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is to allow nuclear inspections only after the delivery of essential non-nuclear components for the first light water reactor unit, including turbines and generators, is completed. But the United States has already come out with a unilateral demand for nuclear inspections and even carries on a campaign to apply pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, misleading international opinion into thinking that we are violating the Framework.

Those are the prevailing circumstances surrounding the so-called nuclear issue. Under those circumstances, what is really the concern expressed by those countries in their statements? Is it their concern at seeing the self-defensive capability to cope with the direct threat and annihilation policy of the largest nuclear power? Is it their concern that we do our utmost to defend the sovereignty and the right to existence of our nation and people? Is it their concern at witnessing opposition to high-handed behaviour and a way of thinking based on power supremacy in international relations?

The fact that the United States lists our country as a part of an axis of evil and as a target for a pre-emptive nuclear strike constitutes an open challenge to that country's obligations under the Agreed Framework. This amounts to the declared nullification of the Framework.

Because the United States has adopted the policy of launching a pre-emptive nuclear strike against our country, it has violated the basic spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It has also made a dead letter of the inter-Korean joint declaration on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The number one violator of the NPT is, in fact, the United States. That is the reality which is ignored. It is unrealistic and unfair at this point to unilaterally urge implementation of the safeguards agreement.

Since the United States threatens by force the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as never before, politicizing the question of a pre-emptive nuclear strike, and since the fate of the Agreed Framework is at the crossroads between life or death, we have recently put forward a proposal for concluding a non-aggression treaty between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This reflects the will and desire of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to end the grave situation on the Korean peninsula and to safeguard the peace and security of Korea and North-East Asia.

We urge the United States to give our proposal further serious consideration. It is a most reasonable and realistic proposal for resolving the nuclear issue against the backdrop of the prevailing situation in Korea. However, we note that the Bush administration rejects our proposal for a non-aggression treaty and, instead, insists that we first scrap our so-called nuclear weapons programme. Rejection of the proposal to conclude a non-aggression treaty would mean that the United States has the intention of attacking the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a small and divided country, values its sovereignty and right to existence more than life itself and regards the removal of threats to its sovereignty and the right to

existence as the criteria for settling all issues concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We make it clear that the insistence of the United States that we first scrap our nuclear weapons programme constitutes a direct threat to us, and it should be kept in mind that this will inevitably spark a new clash. If this is the case, we are compelled to exercise our power and are prepared to cope with that kind of situation.

My delegation draws the Assembly's attention to the fact that the United States has abruptly taken up the nuclear issue at the very point in time when relations between North and South Korea and between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are developing positively.

It should be noted that one of the reasons why the United States abruptly raised the nuclear issue is to interrupt the progress in relations between North and South Korea and between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Now the United States is trying to create an atmosphere of pressure for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through its so-called policy coordination with its allies. In this regard, we particularly urge the countries neighbouring Korea not to follow blindly the United States policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is necessary to have second thoughts: such blind action might do harm to themselves.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States.

Mr. Michaels (United States of America): The United States has no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. We have no plans to place nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. We welcome a nuclear-weapon-free Korean Peninsula. Finally, we have no plans to attack North Korea. We seek a peaceful resolution to the tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The President: I understand that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has asked for a second intervention in exercise of right of reply. Let me remind the representative that the limit is five minutes.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): If the United States wants in earnest the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and its vicinity, it should cease its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a full reflection of the pursuit by the United States of its unilateral interests in North-East Asia. As long as the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea persists, a second and third nuclear problem might arise at any time, which the United States sees as necessary, and peace and security of the region would remain as elusive as ever.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 14?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 34

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Draft resolution (A/57/L.15/Rev.1)

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1.

Mr. Kusljugić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I should like to announce that, since the publication of draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1, the following countries have become sponsors: Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Singapore, Sweden and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

There has not been a session of the General Assembly since 1992 on whose agenda my country has not been an item, which indicates that it has been a major international problem. It is regularly discussed in the context of the annual reports of the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and several other annual reports. It is considered during Security Council meetings, and resolutions concerning it are prepared and adopted annually.

I should like to remind the Assembly why my country has been a major international problem for so long. On 22 May 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a member of the United Nations family. By that time, it was clear that the civilian population would be the main victim of the aggression against the new Bosnian State, since the first atrocities had already occurred. We in Bosnia and Herzegovina had expected that the international community, represented in the United Nations, would react decisively and quickly to prevent the further suffering of civilians. Unfortunately, we waited for such action by the international community for more than three years. Instead of taking resolute action to stop the war, the international community decided to intervene with a peacekeeping force — the United Nations Protection Force — and to provide humanitarian assistance.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was called a problem from hell, practically unsolvable. Indeed, we in Bosnia and Herzegovina were living in hell from 1992 to 1995, but we did not think that the problem was unsolvable. We knew that the root cause of the war was the reappearance of extreme nationalism and aggression against the Bosnian State, with the objective of destroying Bosnian multi-ethnic society and of creating ethnically "pure" territories. We knew that the war had been planned and ignited outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. We knew that the root cause of the conflict was not a historic and ancient hatred among Bosnia's ethnic groups, as enemies of the new Bosnian State claimed. Unfortunately, at the time, many in the international community did not understand or have the necessary determination to stop the war and to prevent further atrocities. Recent trials at The Hague have proved that they were wrong, and we hope that the international community has learned a lesson in Bosnia.

However, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have paid a painful price for that lesson. The price paid by the Bosnian people is well known: more than 6 per cent of them were killed or are missing, and more than half were displaced. The worst European war crimes since the end of the Second World War were committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the country's physical infrastructure and economy were destroyed. Dark symbols of the suffering of the civilian population were ethnic cleansing, detention camps, systematic mass rape, torture, besieged cities and, finally, the darkest page in human history, the genocide in the United Nations "safe area" of Srebrenica. Despite all that, recent developments in my country show substantial progress in the process of rebuilding a multi-ethnic, democratic, sustainable and modern Bosnia and Herzegovina that will be fully integrated into European structures.

I am pleased to announce, as we enter the second decade of our full membership in the United Nations, that Bosnia and Herzegovina will soon no longer be on the agenda of United Nations bodies. The draft resolution on behalf of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina that is on the agenda today — the last one in a 10-year sequence — provides an overall picture of the current situation and of progress achieved over the past year, and it contains recommendations for action in the near future.

In general, there has recently been significant progress in the stabilization and normalization of the situation in my country. That is a result of the joint efforts of Bosnia's authorities and of representatives of the international community. In the past year alone, Bosnia and Herzegovina fulfilled the necessary conditions to become a member of the Council of Europe and joined that body; met the requirements of the road map in order to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union; successfully prepared and organized general elections for the first time in its post-war history; promptly participated in global efforts against terrorism; developed the State Border Service to its full capacity and substantially reduced illegal migration; further improved bilateral relations with its neighbouring countries, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; signed bilateral free trade agreements with the countries involved in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe; and reduced its military assets and established the Standing Committee on Military Matters, with the objective of future admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Partnership for Peace programme. Additionally, the international community successfully carried out the final activities of UNMIBH's mandate, prepared arrangements for its transition to the European Union Police Mission and reorganized its work by adopting a more efficient, streamlined organizational model.

We consider the progress achieved last year as only one phase in the long-term transitional process from war to peace, from a destroyed economy to sustainable development and from war-torn State

structures to sustainable, modern and efficient State institutions. I should now like to focus on the major problems that remain.

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton-Paris Peace Agreement, is a legally binding document that sets out principles for the future organization of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, in the seven years since it was signed, it has been used more as a tool of obstructionists to stop the State's progress and to impede the development of common State institutions than as a foundation that can be further built upon for the benefit of the entire country and its people. Further development of political structures, in accordance with European human rights standards and with the requirements of Euro-Atlantic associations, is one of our most urgent priorities.

The problem of indicted war criminals who are still at large after seven years remains a painful and frustrating issue that burdens my country's past and clouds its future. Reconciliation and confidence-building will not be possible unless the individuals responsible for atrocities and genocide are tried and sentenced. The fact that such individuals are being sheltered in the neighbouring country only aggravates this matter and raises doubts regarding their desire for good neighbourly relations.

Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

A major remaining priority is to establish the rule of law. We realize that the corruption and the lack of transparency seriously hamper economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we expect that the restructured police and judiciary system will combat corruption and other illegal activities more successfully. The long overdue process of restructuring Bosnia and Herzegovina's court system at all levels, the establishment of the State Court, the further development of sustainable law enforcement structures, based on the foundations laid by the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are some of the priorities in this sector.

The economy of the country is in a poor state, and unless it is given new life by fresh venture capital, it might present a source of instability in the future. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are determined to create a self-sustainable, market-oriented economy, operating in a single economic space, to complete as soon as possible the process of privatization, further improve banking and capital markets, reform financial systems, and provide adequate social protection. The recently adopted "Jobs and Justice" program makes a good foundation and gives hopes that an environment making possible the inflow of foreign investment and an outburst of private initiative will shortly be created.

Even though refugees have been returning and property restored in recent years, we should not lose momentum. It is evident that security has been improved significantly throughout the country. However, the fulfilment of Annex VII of the Peace Agreement is another task, closely linked to the success of the economic recovery and establishing the rule of law.

Corruption, organized crime and illegal criminal activities seriously hamper improvement in all the previously mentioned areas. Criminal networks operate on a regional basis; they have neither nationality nor religion. My country will spare no effort to capture those individuals or groups of individuals and it is ready to cooperate with neighbouring countries, countries in the region and the international community to complete this task. In this context, I would like to mention that the ill repute, recently brought upon my country by disregarding United Nations Security Council resolutions is also the fault of irresponsible individuals, essentially criminals, who will be brought to justice.

The implementation of necessary structural reforms, intended to solve the mentioned problems, will require assistance from the international organizations that are willing to participate and to aid. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to working together with the international community to fulfil the vision of developing a modern, democratic, multiethnic, viable European country. It is on the basis of that vision that we face the important challenges and tremendous tasks ahead of us.

I would also like to announce the revision of the draft resolution (A/57/L.15/Rev.1) in operative paragraph 7. The paragraph should start with "notes" instead of "also welcomes".

Mr. Moesby (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia,

Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries of the European Economic Area Norway and Iceland align themselves with this statement.

Last month the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, briefed the Security Council on his efforts to assist the reform process. His briefing reinforced the impression of continued progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but at the same time stressed that there are still major tasks to be accomplished in the coming months. The European Union has already welcomed progress in relation to the "Road Map", the first step in the EU Stabilisation and Association Process for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accelerated reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina would undoubtedly put the country on the road to further European integration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina went to the polls on 5 October. Seven years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, politicians were elected for the first time for a period of four years. It was also the first time the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina assumed responsibility for the election process themselves. The European Union commends the electoral authorities for their professional organization of the elections, which were carried out in a peaceful manner.

At the same time the European Union regrets the low participation in the elections. The High Representative characterized it as a protest vote. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have shown their disappointment with the inadequate progress towards generating change and building a better future. It is a call for a more efficient political system and faster economic and social reforms. Thus, the European Union urges the rapid formation of effective governments genuinely committed to increasing the pace of the reform process. The European Union would like to reconfirm its strong commitment to actively assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in this effort.

To a much greater extent than before all countries in the region should take responsibility for their own development. This applies to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. With aid falling, and debt mounting, economic reforms have become more urgent than ever to attract much-needed foreign investments to fill the gap. The European Union, together with other institutions and fora, such as the Stability Pact, has given considerable support to the reform process in the region.

Political elites as well as the general public have to identify with the reform processes bringing them closer to Europe. Institution-building must be strengthened and the local level should be involved in the reform process in a more effective way. Furthermore, greater emphasis should be given to civil society, especially youth and women and their participation in society, politics, and education. The international community must continue to support this process.

The existence of organized crime and corruption prevents the roots of progress and democratic developments from taking hold. Organized crime is a threat to the rule of law, to democracy and human rights as well as to social progress and economic reform. It is a threat to security and stability. Unless these destructive structures are broken down the international efforts to promote democracy and economic development will not be sustainable.

The fight against organised crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans as a whole is therefore high on the agenda for the European Union. Together with the United Kingdom, the European Union is preparing a Conference on Organized Crime in South Eastern Europe. The conference will take place in London on 25 November and will be a good opportunity for the countries in the region to make commitments within existing mechanisms and to set clear targets in the fight against organized crime.

The international community has identified the following priority areas as crucial for the reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina: rule of law, institution building and the economy, as well as the return of refugees and reconstruction. The former High Representative, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, successfully promoted those priorities and the European Union would like to thank him for his extraordinary commitment to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is now crucial to invigorate the pace of reform. Strengthening the rule of law is an essential part of the democratisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Developing a well-functioning judiciary and State administration are prerequisites for the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The European Union fully

supports High Representative Paddy Ashdown in his "Justice and Jobs" programme, and we commend the results already achieved in this field. Reform in the economic sector is key to prosperity for Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular with a view to creating jobs and raising personal income. This will lead to tangible improvements in living standards. Restarting the economy and creating sustainable development through the adoption of structural reforms should be a priority in the work of the future Government. The implementation of these reforms will be a precondition for continued international financial assistance.

The rule of law approach also includes full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia by all States and parties of the region. This constitutes a non-negotiable requirement of international law. In this regard, access to witnesses and archives is essential.

The European Union remains determined that all those indicted for war crimes should be brought to justice. The continuing impunity of persons indicted on various counts of genocide must end. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as of both entities must spare no effort to locate, arrest and transfer such persons to the custody of the International Tribunal.

The European Union has with great concern learned of the arms exports from Bosnia and Herzegovina through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Iraq. This is a violation of United Nations sanctions and demands a swift response from the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina at both the State and entity level. The current investigations have illustrated the need for an accelerated defence reform and a transfer of competencies for arms exports from the entity to the State level. The recent commitment of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take action in this regard is a step forward which will require immediate implementation. The European Union would like to underline the crucial importance of establishing State-level control over the export of military weapons and equipment.

The European Union emphasizes the need for a sustainable solution to the issue of displaced persons. In recent years there has been a steady improvement in the return figures. In 2002 alone there have been more than 60,000 registered returns, resulting in a total of almost 900,000 returnees. But still more needs to be done in order to create a favourable climate for returnees. The European Union therefore strongly regrets local obstruction to returns and urges all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to honour their commitment to address outstanding legal and administrative issues in this regard. The adequate attribution of resources by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities towards the sustainability of the process of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons is of utmost importance.

The European Union noted with satisfaction that the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has been prolonged until the end of the year. UNMIBH has now, after seven years, successfully fulfilled its mandate in the area of police reform and restructuring. The prolongation will ensure an orderly transition to the European Union Police Mission, which will take over on 1 January 2003. I am happy to inform the Assembly that the Status of Forces Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed in Sarajevo last month, enabling the EU Police Mission to take over when the United Nations Mission ends its work.

In this context, the European Union would like to stress the importance of enhanced cooperation and coordination among different international actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the Stabilization and Association Process and the EU Police Mission, the European Union will continue to work with the authorities and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in their endeavours to build a well-functioning multi-ethnic society.

Mr. Kulyk (Ukraine): Only a few weeks ago, the Security Council and interested Member States heard an open briefing on current political developments in the country by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein.

Their key common message was distinct enough. Bosnia and Herzegovina remains on the right path. There may be some bumps in the road, but the direction is clear.

Next week will mark the seventh year since the end of the war in Bosnia. It is obviously more difficult to organize peace than to win a war. The very fact that we all — Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the international community — have succeeded in going this far in implementing the Dayton-Paris Peace

Agreement is indeed evidence of the viability of its design and of the realistic approach taken to its realization.

Peace has taken root within the country. Nearly a million refugees have returned to their homes; tangible progress has been made in the consolidation of State institutions; positive changes are visible in the economic sphere; a comprehensive reform of the judicial system has been instituted; the police and armed forces are being overhauled; the number of illegal migrants is down; and the overall crime rate has been reduced.

However, this list of practical successes is far from exhaustive. The recent accession of Sarajevo to the Council of Europe is proof of the encouraging changes on the ground. We believe that the involvement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of European integration is the only way to finally overcome the consequences of war.

In this regard, it is important for the international community to send a strong message to the winners of the 5 October general elections that their victory means, first and foremost, the additional responsibility of making progress in pursuit of the reforms. We congratulate the Bosnian authorities on the impressive job they did in ensuring the democratic, free and fair character of the elections, and we join those delegations that believe that the results of those elections reflect the will to speed up substantially the pace of political and economic transformation.

The newly elected leaders should now demonstrate in practice their readiness to fulfil the responsibilities that have been entrusted to them.

In a broader international context, such a task requires further steps to strengthen regional stability. My country warmly welcomes the results of the trilateral summit of the heads of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia and Croatia, held in Sarajevo on 15 July 2002, and notes with satisfaction the development of active cooperation among those countries. We encourage our partners to continue and enhance this vital trend.

The ambitious reform plan recently presented by Paddy Ashdown should provide the Bosnian leaders with a clear vision of the concrete steps that need to be taken immediately.

My delegation endorses the High Representative's six priority tasks for further reform in the coming six months. The strengthening of the rule of law and the advancement of economic reforms must remain key elements of the recovery strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Along with other urgent issues, we wish to reaffirm the importance of ensuring national minority rights in the country. The Ukrainian community is the fourth-largest ethnic group in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At present, there is a further need to improve the conditions for their national and cultural revival.

My delegation calls upon the Bosnian authorities to continue their efforts to protect minority rights. We also hope that the new law on national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a practical and useful instrument that will allow minorities to exercise their rights according to European standards.

Seven years of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina are about to end. On behalf of the Government of Ukraine, I would like to pay tribute to the men and women of the Mission, led by Special Representative Jacques Paul Klein. We commend the positive results achieved by the Mission in the areas of police reform, police restructuring, institution-building and inter-police-force cooperation.

My delegation hopes that the practical goals determined by UNMIBH will be successfully implemented by the EU follow-on mission.

The intention of the European Union to make a leading contribution to the streamlining of the overall civilian and police presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a fundamental step, which should accelerate further positive changes in that country.

Having already expressed our interest in being involved in the EU-led military crisis-management operations and in processes related to the European security and defence policy, including its military and civilian aspects, my Government reiterates its readiness to contribute to the EU Police Mission.

Let me conclude by expressing my country's utmost support for the intense efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina to build a democratic and prosperous society, with respect for the rule of law and for the rights of each and every citizen. We remain committed to achieving these goals and intend to continue our

active participation in international efforts aimed at bringing peace and stability to the country.

Mr. Bozay (Turkey): Turkey aligns itself with the statement already made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore confine myself to commenting briefly on those points which have particular importance as seen from the perspective of my country.

At the outset, I would like to remind this body that Turkey, which is also a Balkan country, has always been directly involved in efforts geared towards the establishment of peace and stability in the region. Fostering friendly relations and cooperation among the countries of the Balkans has been, and remains, the most reliable and productive avenue to this end. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been at the forefront of our concerns, given our shared history and the ties we have with that country.

As a member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, Turkey is a strong supporter of the key strategic targets set by that body. The consolidation of state institutions, the pursuit of economic reform and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons are therefore the main priorities of my country in reviewing the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We note the considerable achievements in all of these areas, as well as the serious challenges that remain, as Bosnia moves towards European integration, which is its destiny. Reconciliation among the constituent people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is a prerequisite for sustainable stability and development in the country, must continue.

Earlier Governments endeavoured to achieve such reconciliation by political, judicial and economic reform. Unfortunately, a commonly agreed and coherent agenda in pursuing these reforms was lacking. This had negative repercussions on the daily lives of Bosnians, who understandably manifested their dissatisfaction through the low level of their participation in the elections and the level of the protest vote.

In this vein, Turkey supports the "Justice and Jobs" programme of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, which is a well-designed agenda for pursuing those reforms. We call upon the newly elected representatives of Bosnia to form a Government at the earliest opportunity in order to engage themselves in this agenda. The Bosnian people are waiting for that, and as Lord Ashdown suggested in his recent report to the Secretary-General, the international community will also judge the incoming Governments at the State and entity level by their commitment to reform. The inherent message of the protest votes is clear: Bosnians want reform.

The priorities of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina are justice, and then jobs, through reform. This being understood, the international community has put its efforts on a new footing, placing a new emphasis on the rule of law. The entrenched power structures in various cantons, cities and public enterprises are among the main obstacles to establishing the true rule of law in Bosnia. The new Governments at the State and entity level should work in earnest to eliminate these power structures and fully cooperate with the international presence in Bosnia to this end.

In the same vein, the Government should thoroughly implement economic reforms, which will stimulate domestic production and foreign investment, and pursue effective policies for collecting or generating sufficient revenue. This is vital with regard to the "jobs" dimension of Lord Ashdown's agenda, and it is necessary in order to convince the international community that its financial assistance will be efficiently utilized within the framework of reform.

One of the serious hurdles for the justice and jobs dimension of the reform agenda is the situation of the indicted war criminals. We welcome the fact that so far a considerable number of them have been apprehended. Many are still at large, however. On this matter, we need the cooperation of the respective Governments. Inter-ethnic respect and confidence need to be consolidated by bringing to justice Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Moreover, they are still casting dark shadows upon political and economic life in Bosnia, and might endanger the overall reform agenda of the High Representative.

The return of refugees and internally displaced persons is the litmus test of the Dayton Accords. Improved security conditions, a more cooperative and receptive political mind-set, which is lacking in some areas, as well as countrywide implementation of property legislation, may positively affect the returns.

As I say this, I am well aware of the vital need for the success of the economic reforms in Lord Ashdown's programmes in order to achieve a meaningful number of returns.

In tackling those challenges, I believe that in the future we should not shy away from commending those parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina that cooperate. That would be a sign of international support for those parties and would also serve to encourage them to stay on a prudent path.

I would like to emphasize that the last paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.15, entitled "The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina", requests the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the United Nations activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina covering the period 1992-2002. We look forward to seeing that report, as it will give us a chance to review the lessons learned as well as the best practices from the United Nations experience in Bosnia.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of the United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the tremendous job he has done there. We hope that the European Union Police Mission will carry the flag of success that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved under the able administration of Mr. Klein.

In the history of Bosnia, bridges mean more than their physical function might suggest. They have now become symbols of reconciliation, and the constituent people of Bosnia and Herzegovina would like them to remain intact. At this important stage of Bosnian politics, the international community should keep in mind that there is still a need to help Bosnians to rebuild the old bridges that span rivers and hearts. Such bridges are not only the physical structures across the Neretva, Bosna, Una, Drina and Sava rivers, but, more importantly, the social, political and economic bridges. To be more precise, economic and judicial reform, building State institutions and ensuring the speedy return of refugees and displaced persons will serve as the cement that strengthens the true bridges that connect the hearts and minds of the Bosnian people.

Ms. Ognjanovac (Croatia): Croatia remains vitally interested in developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that Croats are one of the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not the only reason for our interest. The stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina has direct relevance to the stability and, moreover, the prosperity of Croatia itself. The shape and length of our country's border with Bosnia and Herzegovina alone supports this argument. Both countries rely heavily on each other's traffic infrastructures and are important trade partners. It is therefore quite clear why my Government firmly supports a stable and politically, institutionally and economically self-sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is encouraging to see that most, if not all, of the political parties that participated in the recent elections expressed their will to live in a common State, and to contribute to its prosperity. The political parties that won the majority of the voters' support deserve to be given a chance to prove their trustworthiness. If there is something that may be taken as worrisome, it is probably the low voter turnout. Only 55 per cent of the electorate voted, a figure very similar to that of those who voted in Serbia's presidential election. Surely that is an indicator of resignation and fatigue.

For some time, Croatia has been drawing the attention of the international community to the main contradiction within Bosnia and Herzegovina's constitutional structure, namely, the integrity of the country on the one hand, and its de facto partition on the other. Dayton tried to reconcile the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina through pledges to create joint institutions that, in turn, were to secure their respective basic interests and preserve the values of a multiethnic society. The pledge to reverse ethnic cleansing and restore the pre-war demographic composition fed people's hopes and raised expectations.

At the same time, Dayton did not provide any guidance about how to manage the built-in conceptual contradiction of the peace agreement. The Croats, as the smallest constituent nation, cannot rely on the same factors as the other two constituent nations to protect their identity and interests, such as size and a separate entity. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina can lend their trust only to a political system that guarantees them the preservation of their national, cultural and religious identity, and allows them to be genuinely represented in all joint institutions.

The present constitutional arrangement is the one that could be agreed upon by all sides at the time it was negotiated. Even though it has not been fully implemented, it has served the primary purpose of the

Peace Accord, that is, to stop the bloodshed. The constitutional structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina must continue to develop and evolve with the dynamics of the country's political, economic and social life. That is the road to a democratic and self-sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the High Representative correctly observed in one of his recent speeches, Dayton is the floor and not the ceiling.

Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is one of the obligations that parties to the Dayton Agreement undertook when signing the Agreement. A major breakthrough has been made with the arrest of Slobodan Milosevic and with the indictments against him being extended to the crimes committed in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The indictments will bring justice for the victims, and also serve the establishment of historical records concerning the events in the former Yugoslavia. Consequently, this will ultimately benefit reconciliation among the people of the region.

On a more sombre note, we simply cannot accept that two of the most wanted indictees — Messrs. Karadzic and Mladic — are still at large. We sincerely hope that their time is finally running out, and that those who are in a position to arrest them will do so. There can be no sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina with Karadzic and Mladic at large.

What is it that needs to be done to put Bosnia and Herzegovina irreversibly onto the road to statehood as a member of the European Union, as Lord Ashdown so eloquently put it recently? The reform proposals recently made by the High Representative are very well founded and deserve to be seriously considered. Strengthening the role of the State, reducing the complexity of the administrative system and ensuring a merit system in the selection and job security of civil servants are some of the measures that deserve our attention.

The justice system should definitely be among the priorities. Many countries in transition are plagued with corruption, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is no exception. Victory over this disease will create favourable conditions for foreign direct investment, and will benefit the country in the long run.

We also hope that authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina will find incentives for young people to remain in the country and to attract those who are willing to come back from abroad. Fresh ideas, innovation and open minds are only a few of the many benefits that young generations bring.

Membership in the Council of Europe represents a good starting point for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process that should eventually culminate in European Union membership. We will do our utmost to provide help and assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina, because we need a stable neighbour and partner we can count on in our common European future.

Mr. Kirn (Slovenia): Slovenia fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

Having been actively engaged in the international community's efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the beginning, I would like to express some additional views in my national capacity.

We consider today's debate as an important and appropriate occasion to give new impetus to international efforts to build a prosperous, stable and European-oriented Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina stands at an important juncture in the process of consolidating its State. It should continuously demonstrate its determination to create a modern European State with effective government, stable institutions and rising standards in public life.

Today's Bosnia and Herzegovina faces some arduous tasks: strengthening the rule of law, creating a stable and friendly economic environment and fighting the corruption and organized crime that distort the path of economic and political development. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to work hard and with strengthened responsibility to meet the challenges ahead. Not only will they have to work hard to meet the requirements and expectations of the international community, they will first have to meet the expectations of their own peoples. Yet, the challenges confronting Bosnia and Herzegovina remain too numerous to be faced alone. International assistance is still needed.

The experience of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that much progress has already been achieved. Slovenia welcomes the active role of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and considers that a continued international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is

vital to achieving the aims that the international community set out seven years ago.

The departure of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) should not serve to scale down the international community's political support and financial resources. The agencies of the United Nations, along with regional organizations, should continue to encourage and assist Bosnia and Herzegovina to face the remaining challenges. In that respect, the European Union police mission that will take over in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 January 2003 is of particular importance.

Our work should more vigorously address the people and their needs, finding areas of leverage that will consolidate political stability, peace and security and spark an economic revival. Slovenia is interested in the peace, political stability and functioning economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have demonstrated that interest through economic cooperation and our ongoing support for the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into European structures.

Slovenia is actively participating in the stabilization processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By establishing the International Trust Fund for Demining and the Regional Centre for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children, it seeks to contribute to improving the daily lives of ordinary people who continue to be affected by the legacy of war.

Slovenia actively participates in the process of stabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the establishment of the International Trust Fund for Demining and the Regional Centre for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children, it wants to contribute to ameliorating the daily life of ordinary people who continue to be affected by the legacy of war. Slovenia is actively taking part in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and is a troop-contributing country to the Stablization Force.

We continue to believe that the revival of the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina is vital for the stabilization and prosperity of the country and of the region. In addition to liberalizing trade and providing a favourable investment climate, our efforts should be aimed at better utilizing the skills and energy of local human resources and at making better use of the country's natural resources. Creating jobs, generating incentives for the development of small and medium-size enterprises, and encouraging skilled trained people to stay in their home country are some of the important tasks today facing both the international community and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In recent years, Slovenia has been one of the biggest foreign investors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it continues to be a strong advocate of economic cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels.

We strongly support the efforts of the High Representative to strengthen the rule of law and to build a solid judicial system. Slovenia was among the strongest supporters of membership for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Council of Europe, which provides good opportunities to exercise the rule of law. Integration into European structures provides a firm guarantee of the consolidation of democracy and stabilization of the country and the entire region, in all aspects.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that Slovenia shares the view that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, expressed last month to the Security Council, that the outcome of the recent elections was a call for a change. That call by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina has to be transformed into their active engagement in the process of consolidating their State, based on European standards of good governance and sound domestic economic policies that foster growth and development. The international community should spare no effort to continue to support the endeavours of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in assuming their overall responsibility for their future. Slovenia is determined to continue its active participation in those efforts.

Mr. Haneda (Japan): Japan highly commends Bosnia and Herzegovina for its achievements in implementing the peace process over the past year, such as its admission to the Council of Europe, the amendment of the Constitutions of the two entities to ensure equality among the three main ethnic groups and the holding of self-organized elections. We also appreciate the efforts of the High Representative, Mr. Paddy Ashdown, the members of the Peace Implementation Council, and all those who have participated in the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the Stabilization Force and other relevant organizations. At the same time, we recognize that much remains to be done pending the day when Bosnia and Herzegovina will stand on its own without the involvement of the international community.

The general elections last month were the first to be conducted by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of the conflict in 1995, and were thus an important milestone in the peace implementation process. Recognizing the importance of the elections, the Government of Japan dispatched observers to participate in the monitoring team of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We also provided support to a United Nations Development Programme project, whose purpose was to raise the consciousness of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to the importance of the elections.

Japan is encouraged by the fact that the general elections were carried out smoothly, and largely in accordance with international standards. The tenure of the elected officials is four years. That period will be crucially important for the peace implementation process. Japan looks forward to the early formation of a new, effectively functioning Government that will assume responsibility for the future of the country and make every effort to pursue the peace implementation process in cooperation with the international community.

It is particularly important that the elected leaders commit themselves, as a matter of priority, to work together to advance reforms necessary for the establishment of the rule of law and the creation of employment opportunities, as advocated by the High Representative. They will also be expected to address the six elements of the reform agenda that Mr. Ashdown set out last month. Corruption and organized crime are also issues that demand their urgent attention.

It is essential that the new Government cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We call upon the newly elected officials and all other parties concerned to fully support the activities of the Tribunal and to surrender all those who have been indicted. We urge Bosnia and Herzegovina to restructure its justice system as a whole and to develop the national capacity to prosecute less serious war crimes.

Let me briefly refer to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Japan notes with satisfaction that UNMIBH has made commendable progress in police reform, border control and the return of members of minority groups, and that it is in the final stages of implementing its core mandate. That, indeed, is a good example of a successful exit strategy of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Japan is also pleased to note that the preparations for the transition of responsibility from UNMIBH to the European Union Police Mission are well on track.

Japan has been an active member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. We have pledged and are steadily implementing a donation of approximately $500 million to assist in the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina in various areas including transportation, food, medical services, education, mine clearance and refugee returns. Japan, in cooperation with the rest of the international community, will continue its steadfast support of the peace implementation process in the belief that the stability and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina are crucial to the peace and development of South-Eastern Europe as a whole.

In closing, I am pleased to voice Japan's support for the draft resolution before us in document A/57/L.15/Rev.1.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): This debate is taking place between two important events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of October, the first locally organized general elections took place. At the end of next month, the United Nations will complete its mandate there and will be replaced by a European Union mission. Both events testify to the overall positive developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina since last year's debate in the General Assembly.

My delegation would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of the outgoing United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) to stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus in the region as a whole. We are looking forward to a smooth transition to the European Union mission and express our confidence in its equally constructive engagement in the future.

Cooperation and the development of stable and friendly relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina are among the top objectives of Yugoslavia's foreign policy. I am pleased to be able to state that, both bilaterally and regionally, important progress has been achieved over the past year in pursuing those goals. Our two countries maintain a regular dialogue on many issues of mutual interest and the tangible results are in evidence.

The Inter-State Council for Cooperation met earlier this year in Belgrade at the highest political level. A number of ministerial and other high-level official visits were also exchanged. I would like to underline in particular the importance of the trilateral meeting in July of the heads of State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia in Sarajevo. We expect another similar summit in the future.

Allow me to mention also just a few concrete examples of an upward trend characterizing our cooperation. The negotiations on border identification between the two countries are progressing and over 50 per cent of the borderline has been identified. In addition to the Free Trade Agreement, our two countries have recently signed an agreement on dual citizenship that will significantly facilitate the exercise of rights of citizens on both sides of the border. These agreements, together with the existing non-visa regime, are aimed at ensuring a free flow of people and goods across our border. Agreements on road transportation and social insurance have also been signed, while several other bilateral agreements are currently in preparation.

This active cooperation is conducted on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and within the framework of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. Yugoslavia remains fully committed to the implementation of the Agreement and to the fulfilment of its obligation in that regard.

Both our countries are also engaged in intensive efforts to achieve stability and cooperation within regional organizations, particularly within the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and the South-East European Cooperation Process, which Yugoslavia is currently chairing. These forums are particularly important in giving a direction to the implementation of regionally shared objectives, such as the enhancement of democracy and the rule of law, the development of the market economy, respect for human rights, and combating terrorism and organized crime.

Although, as I have mentioned, a lot has been achieved in normalizing and improving the relations between Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, much remains to be done to overcome the difficult legacy of the 1990s. To that end, we are looking forward to cooperating with the new Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. One issue requires particular attention. While some 60,000 returns to and within Bosnia and Herzegovina have been registered in 2002, there are still some 400,000 refugees remaining in my country. Obviously, further joint efforts, both bilateral and regional, are necessary to speed up the return process.

Finally, I would like to commend the continuing efforts of High Representative Lord Ashdown in accelerating the process of reform and institution-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We share the view that this is the best way to enable the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take responsibility for their country into their own hands, through their elected representatives. My country stands ready to cooperate fully within the regional framework and as a regional partner in pursuing this goal.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1. I must advise the General Assembly that, in addition to the countries listed on the draft resolution, the United States of America has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 57/10).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38

The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/57/384, A/57/584)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/57/336)

Mr. Brattskar (Norway): Since the conclusion of the peace agreements in Guatemala, Norway has actively supported the implementation process. We will

continue to do so next year as well. Since the last Regional Consultative Group meeting in Washington in February, some important advances have taken place, but we do not feel that there has been a true acceleration in the implementation of the peace accords.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, in some areas backsliding is apparent and the greater respect for human rights that was apparent after the 1996 ceasefire has eroded over the last year. Violations against and harassment of human right defenders continue and, as the report points out, violations by the police have increased. Ghosts from the past, in the shape of illegal groups and clandestine structures, apparently still exist. This gives cause for concern, and it is clear that more decisive action by the Government is needed. We also share the concern expressed by the Secretary-General that stagnation in the implementation of the peace accords, coupled with deterioration in other areas, could jeopardize progress made since 1996. We strongly hope that the Government, in cooperation with civil society, will do its utmost to continue implementing the accords, as well as the nine points that came out of the Washington meeting in February. We look forward to the next meeting of the Consultative Group, which we hope will take place in Guatemala in March 2003.

Part of our support for the peace process has been through contributions to maintain the presence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA). We support the prolongation of MINUGUA through 2003. Unfortunately, the planned ending of MINUGUA would coincide with the Guatemalan change of Government following elections in the autumn of 2003. It is doubtful whether adequate mechanisms to replace the functions of MINUGUA will have been put in place before that time. My Government considers it important that the implementation process not be left to itself in this crucial period. Norway therefore supports the extension of the mandate of MINUGUA, in the form of a restricted presence, for one more year until the end of 2004. The focus of this restricted presence should be on human rights, indigenous rights and the role of the army in a democratic society. It is, however, of the highest importance that the Guatemalan authorities as soon as possible establish mechanisms that can take over MINUGUA's mission.

Many of the countries in Central America have long been riddled with corruption, something that can cripple any attempt at development. It is therefore with great interest that we observe the struggle against corruption that is taking place in these countries, particularly Nicaragua.

Finally, we congratulate the facilitators of the process concerning the border dispute between Guatemala and Belize. We hope the proposals put forward by them will lead to a final and permanent settlement of the issue.

Mr. Moesby (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the country of the European Economic Area that is a member of the European Free Trade Association — Iceland — align themselves with this statement.

Let me first express the gratitude of the European Union to the Secretary-General for the excellent and insightful report on the situation in Central America, which provides a solid foundation for today's discussion on this agenda item.

The European Union and Central America form a strong partnership based on fundamental principles and shared hopes for a better future. The European Union wishes to continue to develop this partnership in order to establish progress and lasting peace in the region founded on democratic principles of peace, freedom and development.

Much has changed in Central America in the almost 20 years since we first discussed this agenda item. Democracy has prevailed. Conflicts have been brought to an end. Progress and development have been allowed to settle and prosper in the region. However, despite the important steps taken, the risk of serious setbacks in the democratic process continues. We still see the long shadows of the internal conflicts, the difficulties of transition to systems of democratic pluralism and the challenges of equitable and sustainable development. These obstacles remain in the way of lasting peace, freedom and economic prosperity in the region.

Central America must face the difficult problems in the region in order to consolidate the substantial progress made so far. Reforms, and the courage to implement them, are necessary in fighting social inequalities, unemployment and poverty. Otherwise these will feed political tension and conflict.

The European Union has always been committed to the development of Central America. Through our Framework Co-operation Agreement and Community Action Plan for the Reconstruction of Central America this commitment has materialized into concrete actions and activities. Our efforts focus on regional integration and in sectors such as health, education and environmental protection.

Since 1984, political cooperation between the European Union and Central America has been institutionalized in the San José Dialogue. Ministers of our two regions met at the XVIII Ministerial Conference of the San José Dialogue, held in Madrid in May this year. At the Conference, the ministers confirmed their commitment to the consolidation of democratic systems, the establishment of closer economic and trade relations and the promotion of human development. They also reaffirmed their commitment to peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

Based on these commitments we agreed to bring our biregional dialogue towards a newer stage of more dynamic and substantial relations. This was a decision that we believe will be beneficial to both the European Union and Central America.

The European Union this year has observed, with the greatest concern, a deterioration of the human rights situation in Guatemala. Particularly worrying is the serious increase in the threats and assaults directed against human rights defenders. We condemn these acts in the strongest possible terms. The Guatemalan authorities have a clear obligation to protect those who are targeted and to bring those responsible to justice. The widespread impunity in Guatemala must come to an end.

The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) has performed remarkably well in consolidating the achievements of the peace agreement. The European Union takes note of the Secretary General's intention to initiate consultations with interested Member States regarding the request of the Guatemalan Government for an extension of MINUGUA's mandate into 2004. The European Union underlines the importance of MINUGUA completing its tasks in the human rights field before gradually handing over its mandate to independent national authorities of Guatemala, bearing in mind the political calendar of Guatemala in 2003. We believe that the ombudsman institution could have an important role to play when MINUGUA's tasks are handed over. We intend to provide the necessary support to that end.

The Government and the parliament of Guatemala must fulfil their responsibilities, in accordance with the peace process, if the democratic process is to succeed. This includes full implementation of the Fiscal Pact, ensuring transparency in public spending and intensifying the fight against corruption. Guatemala must initiate land reforms, ensure respect of the rights of the indigenous population and establish civilian control over State intelligence agencies. These steps are crucial for revitalising the peace process. Just like Guatemalan people, the European Union hopes for a peaceful and prosperous future for Guatemala.

We believe that political and economic integration is of key importance to the future development of Central America. Successful regional integration will lead to a successful integration into the world economy as a whole. The European Union therefore wholeheartedly supports the important work by the Central American Integration System. Drug trafficking, increasing crime rates and labour migration within the region are examples of regional challenges that the Central American countries have to face in unison in order to overcome them.

In the context of political integration, the European Union is delighted to note the progress made to find a just, equitable and definitive solution to the border dispute between Belize and Guatemala. We hope that the settlement of the dispute will open a new era of understanding, cooperation and friendship between the two countries and become a source of inspiration for other countries in the region. The European Union recognizes the importance played by the Organization of American States (OAS) in facilitating the agreement between Belize and Guatemala, and we reiterate our support for OAS initiatives to settle the remaining disputes in the region. These initiatives deserve our full encouragement.

Nicaragua is changing, and important steps have been taken to ensure its citizens a better and safer future. We fully support the efforts of President Bolaños to raise ethical standards in public life, to fight the scourge of corruption and to modernize and rationalize the Nicaraguan economy.

The reforms advocated by the Government are essential in order to strengthen the rule of law and democratic institutions. The European Union accordingly urges other State institutions in Nicaragua to collaborate with President Bolaños in his efforts to meet the challenges ahead.

This year we have joined the people of El Salvador in their celebration of the tenth anniversary of the peace agreements. The European Union wishes to congratulate El Salvador on this important anniversary that put an end to the 12 tragic years of conflict in that country. The agreement set a guiding example of how to reach peaceful political solutions for the benefit of the people and for peace and stability of Central America.

The European Union also wishes to commend El Salvador for the appointment of a new Ombudsman — or in point of fact an Ombudswoman — to the office of the national Ombudsman. The Ombudsman institution has a key role to play in protecting the rights of vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the population, such as poor and indigenous people. The European Union therefore applauds the work of the Ombudsman institutions in Central America; they are indispensable watchdogs of democracy.

The European Union welcomes and supports the efforts of the new Government of Honduras under President Maduro to address the problems related to poverty, corruption and social disintegration, which challenge the maturing democracy of that country. However, the European Union is concerned about the ongoing violence, as well as the recent worrying increase in human rights violations. The European Union underscores the need for stronger Government measures to protect and safeguard the rule of law, in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law. Also, the high number of killings of children and youth is a source of great concern for the Union. It therefore calls for further efforts of the Government of Honduras, under President Maduro, to address the disturbing situation.

The European Union is paying close attention to the situation in Central America. Our partnership is one of mutual respect, and we wish to strengthen our future political and economic cooperation. Strengthening democracy, fighting social inequalities, promoting efficient government and protecting human rights go hand in hand with peace, sustainable development and the creation of favourable conditions for markets and trade. These are ambitions that we share with the people of Central America.

Programme of work

The Acting President: On Thursday morning, 14 November, the General Assembly will hear the remaining speakers on agenda item 38, "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development", and will also consider agenda item 167, "South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation".

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.